Sponsorship Relationships: A Qualitative Case Study of Identifying Success Factors in Sponsorship Relationships

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This research was executed as our bachelor's thesis during the spring semester 2012. The research has provided us with great knowledge and a deeper understanding about the studied subject.

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Abstract

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Title: Sponsorship Relationships: A Qualitative Case Study of Identifying Success Factors in Sponsorship Relationships.
Keywords: Sponsorship; Relationships; Communication; Commitment; Fit

Background: Sponsoring is a marketing and communication tool that has had a major growth over the last two decades. Sponsoring is one of the fastest expanding ways for companies to communicate with their target audience. Despite this, there has been a lack of awareness considering the sponsorship relationships and how they evolved. Most of the research conducted up to now within the area of sponsorship has just been focusing on the sponsoring part as a separated unit, without considering the connection with the sponsee.

Purpose: The purpose for this research is to investigate the relationship between a sponsee and its sponsors to identify success factors and how the parties act in order to ensure these success factors.

Method: This qualitative research has been conducted by a deductive approach where interviews were held as data collection method. The research has been based on a descriptive design.

Conclusions: This research shows that strong commitment and good frequent communication are key factors in order to have a successful sponsorship relationship. The research also shows the importance of having mutual goals in sponsorship relationships, since mutual goals have a tendency to increase the commitment from both parties in a sponsorship relationship.
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1 Introduction

In this chapter the phenomena sponsorship will be described in a wide perspective, and a background of sponsorship will be presented. A broad description of how relationships between different actors look like when it comes to sponsorship relationships is also introduced. Furthermore identified problems will be discussed and end up with a purpose and research questions.

1.1 Background

Sponsoring is a marketing and communication tool that has had a major growth over the last two decades. Sponsoring is one of the fastest expanding ways for companies to communicate with their target audience (Meenaghan and O’Sullivan 2001; Roy and Cornwell 2003; Walker et al 2011). In 2009, sponsorship expenditures reached $44 billion globally (Jensen and Hsu 2011). These numbers only refers to direct costs of purchasing sponsorship rights, to fully exploit a sponsorship, organizations spends two to three times more than what they spend on sponsorship rights (Tsiotsou 2011). Within sponsorship the most widely and often used sponsoring method is sport sponsorship, which includes sponsoring sport organizations, events, teams, athletes and sport facilities (Roy and Cornwell 2003).

History of sponsoring can be traced all the way back to the medieval time when kings gave their favorite musicians and artists the ability to have a wealthy life as long as they pleased their protectors. This kind of sponsoring differs from todays sponsoring in a way that the objective for these kings was to please their own desire, and not to send a message. In early stage sponsorship had the same characteristics as charity, there were few demands on a counter performance (Grönkvist 2000). Sponsoring in a modern and commercial form has its rise in the 1970s when people wanted some kind of counter performance in return (Clark 1995; Jiffer and Roos 1999).
As the world is becoming more and more globalized, the marketing communication has changed. The quantity of information and information channels has increased, which has lead to higher competitiveness but also created greater opportunities for both corporations and consumers. In order to reach through the competitive market with a message, marketing communication can be set up with different vital roles (Tsiotsou 2011). Today there are many options to practice when it comes to marketing communications. Options such as advertising, telemarketing, database marketing, E-commerce and sponsoring are all elements in the marketing communication mix (Blythe 2006; Chavanat et al 2009; Dees et al 2008). As previous stated sponsoring is one of the fastest expanding communication tools, and over the years sponsorship have developed and increased in various ways. The sponsorship phenomena has become broadened, and is now a vide variety of activities. Today sponsoring is a well-used tool for corporate communications, especially for companies active in the consumer market (Olkkonen et al 2000).

To make a sponsorship relationship possible two actors are needed, a sponsor and a sponsee. The purpose and goal differs between these actors and according to Keller (2001) the reasons for why corporations are interested in sponsoring can be several. Keller (2001) explains that some of the main reasons behind sponsoring today are the need of building a strong brand equity, which includes exposure and the possibility of creating strong relationships. This reason is supported by Grönkvist (2000), who says that exposure is the foremost common reason for why corporations choose to be a sponsor. Further reasons could be the need for communication, Good Citizen motive and the motive of association. The most common reason for why the sponsee is interested to build sponsoring relationships is the funds support that the corporations offers. Funds could be of different content such as financial support, attributes that reduces costs or personal competence that provides a higher efficiency (O’Reilly et al 2011).
1.2 Problem Discussion

Sponsorship is a communication tool that has been expanding majorly the last decades (Meenaghan and O’Sullivan 2001; Roy and Cornwell 2003; Walker et al 2011). In 2001 the worldwide sponsorship spending’s where estimated at $24.6 billions (Chadwick and Thwaites 2004) as compared to 2009 where the total sponsorship expenditures was estimated to $44 billion worldwide (Jensen and Hsu 2011). Despite this, there has been a lack of awareness considering the sponsorship relationships and how they evolved. Most of the research conducted up to now within the area of sponsorship has just been focusing on the sponsoring part as a separated unit, without considering the connection with the sponsee and evaluation of sponsorship relationship building (Cobbs 2011; Lund 2011; Farrelly and Quester 2005b; Meenaghan 2001). This is also strengthen by Olkkonen et al (2000) who say that relationship building have been largely ignored in sponsorships between business-to-business organizations.

A sponsorship relationship exists of two actors a sponsor and a sponsee, with different views and objectives on the sponsorship relationship (Olkkonen et al 2000). Even if the relationship between a sponsor and sponsee is of high importance to evaluate in sponsorships, most sponsorship evaluation research continues to focus on aspects such as image and association outcomes rather than the relationship outcome between the sponsor and the sponsee (Gi-Yong et al 2006; Gladden and Wolfe 2001; Gwinner and Eaton 1999). Meenaghan (1999) highlighted the need for new perspectives in order to examine sponsorship relationships in a better way. This is strengthening by Farrelly and Quester (2003) who say that there is a lack of both analytical and empirical studies of the relationship between sponsors and sponsees in sponsorship relationships.

The purpose and goal often differs between the sponsor and the sponsee and the reasons for why sponsors and sponsees are interested in sponsorship relationships can be several and hard to know (Keller 2001). There is not always easy to evaluate what the sponsor and the sponsee see as successful factors in a sponsorship relationship since there are numerous of factors such as having
unclear objectives in a sponsorship relationship that can affect the outcome of sponsorship relationships (Grohs et al 2004; Hartland et al 2005).

Based on the discussion above it is clear that even if sponsorship is a fast growing communication tool, little research has been done concerning the actual relationship between sponsors and sponsees in sponsorship relationships. Because of this, it would be relevant and interesting to investigate the relationship between a sponsee and its sponsors within sponsorship relationships. Therefore, this research contributes with valuable knowledge for actors active within sponsorship relationships.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose for this research is to investigate the relationship between a sponsee and its sponsors to identify success factors and how the parties act in order to ensure these success factors.

1.4 Research Questions

• What are the success factors for a sponsee in a sponsorship relationship?
• What are the success factors for a sponsor in a sponsorship relationship?
• How do a sponsee act in order to ensure these success factors?
• How do sponsors act in order to ensure these success factors?

1.5 Disposition

As showed in figure 1.1 below this research consists of seven chapters. The first chapter present background information about sponsorship and sponsorship relationships, which are further discussed in a problem discussion. This further leads to a purpose and research questions. In chapter two previous literatures relevant for this research are presented, which later is narrowed down to a conceptualization in chapter three. In chapter four it is showed how this
research was conducted and also motivations behind why the research is conducted as it is.

Chapter five present the empirical findings that were collected for this research, and in chapter six the collected data is analyzed and compared with the concepts presented in the literature review chapter. Finally, in chapter seven the conclusions, theoretical implications, managerial implications and suggestions for future research are presented.

![Figure 1.1 Disposition Model](image)
2 Literature Review

This chapter will present a review of past literature on sponsorship and sponsorship relationship. Further will relationship satisfaction, relationship communication, commitment and fit be reviewed. The theoretical framework will be addressed in order to fulfill the purpose and the research questions for this paper.

2.1 Sponsorship

When looking at prior researches one can see that the view and definition of sponsoring has changed. At an early stage the definition of sponsorship were similar to charity where the claim for counter performance did not have the same importance (Grönroos 1999). There have been numbers of attempts to define sponsorship, and one researcher that stated a definition that is still up to date is Meenaghan (1983), who described sponsorship to be an exchange between a sponsor and a sponsee, whereby the sponsor invests in cash and/or in other funds in order to assure the rights to use the exposure potential originated from its association with that sponsee. Mullin et al (2000:254) strengthen this definition several years later by saying “the acquisition of rights to affiliate or directly associate with a product or event for the purpose of deriving benefits related to that affiliation or association.”

When reviewing past literature some issues regarding sponsorship can be identified. Firstly issues regarding the process and outcome of sponsorship have been questioned; secondly it has been hard to measure the effect and effectiveness of sponsorship (Garry et al 2008). What characterizes a sponsorship is an exchange between two organizations in order for them to reach objectives that they are not able to reach solely (Olkkonen 2000).
2.1.1 Sponsorship Relationships

A decade ago few researches had been conducted with the focus of the sponsorship relationship perspective, even though it has been proved that sponsors and sponsees involve in long-term, mutual beneficial relationships (Farrelly and Quester 2005b). Urriolagoitia and Planellas (2007) stresses that, to fully understand the importance of sponsorship relationships the conventional view of sponsorship as a short-term transaction is needed to be rejected. Modern sponsoring organizations now perceive the central role of sponsorship and the great opportunities for creating value from long-term relationship. Furthermore Urriolagoitia and Planellas (2007) refer to Volvo as being a modern sponsor, as they recognize the strategic role of sponsorship and Volvo also states “The goal of sponsorship is to create deeper relationships with our customers and to strengthen the Volvo Group’s brand.” (Volvo.com).

To make a sponsorship relationship possible two actors are needed, a sponsor and a sponsee. The purpose and goal differs between these actors and according to Keller (2001) the reasons for why corporations are interested in sponsoring can be several. Keller (2001) explains that some of the main reasons behind sponsoring today are the need of building a strong brand equity, which includes exposure and the possibility of creating strong relationships. When viewing previous literature it is clear that sponsorship value could origin from a vast variety of sources. The sponsorship relationship values are often divided into tangible and intangible values (Farrelly et al 2006).

2.2 Sponsorship Relationship Satisfaction

Relationship satisfaction signifies an overall feeling, attitude or evaluation that one organization have over another party in a relationship or about the relationship itself (Selnes 1998). Satisfaction has been defined in the business-to-business context as the global evaluation of relationship fulfillment by the firm, (Dwyer et al 1987), or as the positive affects resulting from all aspects of an organizations working relationship with another organization (Frazier et al 1989; Gaski and Nevin 1985). According to Dwyer (1980) relationship satisfaction is a key evaluative result of relationship interactions and is likely an
indicator of relationship renewal. Also when reviewing past literature one can see that some researchers have examined satisfaction as a result of the relationship process (Sanzo et al. 2003; Selnes 1998; Vlosky et al. 1997). Even though satisfaction has an accepted role when explaining relationships it has confronted areas of concern (Farrelly and Quester 2005b). First, different researchers measure satisfaction differently, Brown et al. (1991) and Nowak et al. (1997) have conceptualized satisfaction as an economic phenomena while Anderson and Narus (1990) have described satisfaction to be more of a non-economic phenomena where it is more an emotional or social response one party have over another partner in a relationship. The economic satisfaction has been defined as the positive economic effects the relationship generates, (Geyskens et al. 1999), while the non-economical satisfaction has been defined as the positive intangible effect that comes from the interactions that the other party fulfills within the relationship (Dwyer and Gassenheimer 1992; Mohr et al 1996). Secondly, empirical outcomes to define the effects of the construct have been mixed in ways that variety of variables has been used to define it, and sometimes also because of the research context (Farrelly and Quester 2005b). Despite the areas of concern regarding satisfaction past researchers have stated that satisfaction can increase loyalty and develop switching barriers, (Abdul-Muhmin 2002), and also create positive word of mouth behavior (Henning-Thurau et al 2002). Satisfaction has also been connected to the development of trust and commitment in a relationship, since one of the organizations in the relationship perceives the other organization to offer greater quality (Bühler et al 2007).

2.3 Relationship Communication

According to Cummings (1984) communication between the organizations in a relationship is the essence of coordinating behavior that leads to relationship development. According to Anderson and Weitz (1992) relationship communication is defined as the sharing of meaning and timely information by using formal and informal means, while Morgan and Hunt (1994) say that effective or high quality communication has the components of relevance and reliability and transpires in a timely manner. Further, Mohr and Nevin (1990)
describe communication to be the glue that holds business-to-business relationships together, and Peters and Fletcher (2004) further say that communication within and between organizations impacts directly on marketing effectiveness. Hutt et al (2000) suggest that communication can produce a shared understanding of goals, and also helps to develop agreements regarding norms and roles. Andreasen (1996) further stresses that the major factor of alliance success or failure depends upon the relationship partner’s ability to participate in dialogues concerning market opportunities, expectations, goals and the partner’s willingness to build a working relationship.

Effective communication assists in resolving disagreements and supporting perceptions and expectations, and also effective communication helps to reduce misunderstandings between the organizations in the relationship. Effective communication has also been shown to be a success factor in relationships, and to lead to commitment being developed between the organizations in a relationship (Anderson and Narus 1990; Anderson and Weitz 1992; Ahmed et al 1999). Furthermore by identifying common market-based opportunities and goals in a relationship, communication may raise greater agreements between the partners in a relationship, and this may in turn influence the level of commitment in the relationship (Farrelly et al 2003). Farrelly et al (2003) further stresses that the more effective the communication process is, the greater the commitment in the relationship will be. Also good communication allows partners to know where they stand in the relationship, and good communication also gives an intention to keep the relationship going.

2.3.1 Frequent Communication

The amount of communication refers to the frequency of communication between members of organizations (Farace et al 1977). Mohr and Nevin (1990) say that if the past communication from another party have been frequent and relatively reliable it will result in a better relationship. Through frequent communication common definitions of situations develops, and it also build consensus (Van de Ven and Walker 1984). One of the advantages with having
frequent communication is that it helps in order to build a common understanding of an organizations business functions (Lind and Zmud 1991).

Informal contact that results from frequent communication often leads to collaborations between organizations, and Bleeke and Ernst (1993) say that the most important factor between organizations in order to have a successful relationship is communication. Bleeke and Ernst (1993) further stresses that well designed relationships will crumble without frequent communication. Mohr and Nevin (1990) states that when parties in a relationship are unequal in power, frequent communication may only create tensions and cause the less powerful organization perceiving the more powerful organization as a superior. Mohr and Nevin (1990) further stresses that the inequality in a relationship may make the less powerful organization to feel no need of sending communication, and the more powerful organization to ignore messages which would lead to a damaged frequent communication.

2.3.2 Social Bonding
Social bonds includes factors like acceptance, feelings of likeness, friendship and social interactivity, and according to Wilson et al (1995) social bonds are included in all successful relationships. Organizations come together in order to accomplish economic profits, and social bonding is a way of how organizations achieve mutual profits (Bagozzi 1975). There is a significant positive association between social bonding and trust building in relationships between organizations (Gounaris and Venetis 2002; Nielson 1998). If a person is satisfied in a relationship, that person will be more willing to communicate personal information about himself with another person in a relationship (Parsons 2002). Social bonding is significantly higher in long-term relationships compared to short-term relationships (Dorothy and Bradley 2011). According to Kumar et al (1995) commitment is a highly interrelated concept that stimulates a social bond between parties in a relationship. Sarkar et al (1998) further stresses that this leads to that uncertainty is reduced, and resource utilization efficiency is increased which leads to a generated value for both parties in a relationship.
2.4 Commitment

Commitment is seen as a crucial factor when managing long-term relationships and this is widely accepted within the marketing literature (Theron et al 2008). Morgan and Hunt (1994) further argue that commitment could be seen as a central factor in all relational exchange between organizations. Commitment in relationships could be defined as how prepared the parties within the relationship are to make short-term investments in order to carry out long-term benefits from that relationship (Farrelly and Quester 2005b). Commitment has been widely reviewed in past research of relationship marketing and is recognized as a cornerstone of long-term relationships (Chadwick 2006; Farrelly and Quester 2005b; Morgan and Hunt 1994). When reviewing prior literature it is stated that commitment is central sponsorship relationship construct (Bühler et al 2007; Cobbs 2011; Farrelly and Quester 2005b; Farrelly and Quester 2003). Farrelly and Quester (2005b) further explains this as an orientation regulated by certain intentions and behaviors which is deliberately activated to realize value for both the sponsor and the sponsee over long-term. It is through these behaviors and the connected result that makes the commitment meaningful. According to Farrelly (2010) an imbalance in commitment could be counter-productive for a sponsorship relationship and lead to increased risk of conflicts and it could also decrease the level of quality in the relationship.

Chadwick (2006) explains that commitment in a sponsorship relationship is often based upon commercial gains, however this decision could also be influenced by personal motives of the decision takers or their perceptions of the advantages that this relationship enables for its members. In general when there are a personal connection the view of the sponsorship relationships seems to be of higher commitment and of a more long-term character, especially with organizations where there are existing, personal, local or network links. These sponsorship parties are likely to have similar commercial or organizational values (Ibid). Farrelly and Quester (2005b) say that long-term commitment is a need as its takes years for the brand to be associated with the sport in the stakeholders’ minds. Within a sponsorship relationship commitment usually takes the form of further investments and contains essentially to make the most
of activities. This includes the distribution of additional resources above the original rights fee in order to promote the brand association (Cobbs 2011; Farrelly and Quester 2005b). According to Farrelly and Quester (2005b) one of the most usual forms of commitment in a sponsorship relationship is when a sponsor makes additional investments in related marketing activities to take advantage of their connection they have with the sponsee.

Chadwick (2006) states that one dimension of commitment from the sponsor’s side could be signaled through the willingness to dedicate vital resources in order to build relationship with a partner. This could be expressed by both financial support to secure a sponsorship contract, but it could also be by offering human resources assigned, products given or the commitment of a brand to an association with a sponsee, in order to manage and develop the relationship. Chadwick (2006) further explains that the level of commitment in a sponsorship relationship is likely to increase if one of the partners perceives that the other partner also is committed. Farrelly et al (2003) stresses that by highlighting shared interests, identifying mutual market-based opportunities and goals and by communicating this efficiently between the parties, this may in turn effect the level of commitment in the sponsorship relationship. In other words shared values has a positive effect on commitment in a relationship (Morgan and Hunt 1994; Mukherjee and Nath 2007).

**2.4.1 Shared Values**

Shared value has been defined as: “the *extent to which partners have beliefs in common about what behaviors, goals, and policies, are important or unimportant, appropriate or inappropriate, and right or wrong*” (Morgan and Hunt 1994:25).

This is supported by Chadwick (2006) who stated that, when value is shared between a sponsor and a sponsee the level of commitment increased. The level of commitment also increases if one party of the relationship perceives that the other party secures certain benefits for the initial party (Ibid). This is supported by Theron et al (2008) who explain that shared values have a positive influence
on the relationship commitment. Kashyap and Sivadas (2012) argue that shared values have an impact on the quality of the relationship and that shared values have the effect on a partner’s willingness to accomplish their specified responsibilities and go above and beyond what they are required to.

2.4.2 Mutual Goals

Mutual goals are seen as a factor that influences the level of commitment within a relationship (Farrelly et al 2003; Morgan and Hunt 1994). Wilson (1995:9) defined the concept of mutual goals: “as the degree to which partners share goals that can only be accomplished through joint action and the maintenance of the relationship.”

Wilson (1995) further explains that these mutual goals create a solid motive for the parties to maintain the relationship and that mutual goals is what holds a relationship together when exposed to stress.

2.5 Relationship Fit

When reviewing past literature researchers have defined fit in terms of it determinants. If there is an association or relevance between partners they fit together (Dástous and Bitz 1995). Partners fit together if there is a degree of consistency between partnership expectations and brand schemas (Jagre et al 2001). Fit is also broadly defined as a strategic match between sponsors and sponsees with the goal of targeting audience and/or targeting values (Becker-Olsen and Hill 2006). Becker-Olsen and Simmons (2002) explained the associations between partners by native fit and created fit. Native fit is explained as where the partner’s names go well together, and created fit is explained as where communication activities are used in order to create a fitting relationship. According to Basil and Herr (2006) organizations that fit well together are considered as stronger and more favorable than relationships between organizations that do not fit well together.
However some researchers describe that highly fitting relationship may increase skepticism about organizations motives and that this lead to consumers responding more positive to non-fitting relationships (Ellen et al 2000). Despite claims that fit is important, definitions of fit have been generally imprecise. The term fit has not been consistently used in the literature, instead terms like similarity, typicality and relevancy have been used in order to describe the connection between sponsors and sponsees (Broniarczyk and Alba 1994; Rodgers 2003). A sponsorship relationship will lead to that the picture people have of a sponsee organization will be transferred to the sponsor (Gwinner 2005). Messages that are delivered by a trustable sponsor are considered more convincing and leads to the sponsor’s uniqueness will be easier remembered by people (Keller 1993). According to McDaniel (1999) the fit depends on the similarities between the organizations, and can be described in terms of image and functional similarities (Gwinner and Eaton 1999). One expectation with successful sponsorship relationships is to develop an image transference connection between the sponsor and its sponsee. (Neijens et al 2009). Gwinner and Eaton (1999) say that a reason for why companies gets involved in sponsorship is to increase their brand awareness. Another reason for why companies are involved in sponsorship relationships is since a sponsor can use and exploit the association they have with the sponsee (Farrelly and Quester 2005a).

2.5.1 Brand Image
Keller (1993:3) defines brand image as: “Perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory.”

When reviewing past literature it shows that the fit between a sponsor and its sponsee is critical for image transfer, (Becker-Olsen and Hill 2006; Menon and Kahn 2003; Simmons and Becker-Olsen 2006), and that the objective for many sponsors are to improve and/or to change the brand image (Cornwell et al 2005; Cornwell and Maignan 1998; Meenaghan 1991). Sponsorship relationships gives the sponsor and sponsee the benefits of image transfer, where the associations
people have of one party is transferred over to the other party due to the associations created from the relationship (Gwinner 1997; Meenaghan 1991). According to Gwinner and Eaton (1999) sponsors can leverage their sponsorship investments in terms of image transfer, by choosing sponsees based on image similarities. Sponsorship relationships can improve the brand image of the sponsor and sponsee, however it might also occur that people have a positive perception of the sponsor and/or the sponsee before the sponsorship and therefore it can’t be connected to the fit between the actors (Javalgi et al 1994). Low fit sponsorship relationships trigger negative affects towards both parties in a sponsorship relationship, and unreliable information between the sponsor and sponsee weakens brand image (Becker-Olsen and Hill 2006).

### 2.5.2 Brand Associations

Through brand associations values can be transferred between brands in order to strengthen these certain values (Fyrberg 2008). Fyrberg (2008) further stresses that the power of associations and the connection to the most common context is a vital consideration in branding. The similarity of the brand association is essential, where the similarity could be defined as the degree to which a brand association shares content and meaning with another brand association (Keller 1993). According to Biel (1992) brand associations could result from corporate image, product image and user image, which imply that each of these can be divided into functional and emotional attributes. Functional attributes could be product feature, perceived quality and functional benefits. Emotional attributes could be symbolic associations and emotional associations (Ibid). In sponsorship evaluation the importance of brand association is often missed, in the process through which the connection between the audience and sponsor is made (Quester and Farrelly 1998). Quester and Farrelly (1998) further state that in sponsorship firms aims towards building favorable associations and identities for their brands by communicating through the sponsee. It may take time for consumers to link a corporate image or a brand with a sponsee, however this impression can be long lasting once a meaningful association is established (Ibid). However, question has been raised if
associations created in sponsorship are powerful enough in the consumer's mind to provide real competitive advantage (Quester 1997). According to Quester and Farrally (1998) the term association within a sponsorship is crucial in understanding the efficiency of sponsorship. If a brand image and a related usage situation can through a sponsorship be linked to those favorable feelings memorized from a certain event and if a long-term meaning of what the event signifies can be established and retained, the stronger associations will be founded. If this critical associative aspect of sponsorship is understood, it might lead to discover major insights for future sponsors.
3 Conceptualization

*In the previous literature review chapter sponsorship, sponsorship relationship and three key concepts consisting of communication, commitment and fit was revealed in order to ensure relationship satisfaction. Further in this chapter a conceptual model and a conceptual framework will be displayed in order to visualize the concept measured.*

3.1 Conceptual Model

From the literature review three key concepts where identified, communication, commitment and fit. These key concepts where further operationalized to the variables social bonding, frequent communication, shared values, mutual goals, brand awareness and brand image. Lastly these variables are used in order to answer the research purpose, which is to investigate the relationship between a sponsee and its sponsors to identify success factors, and how the parties act in order to ensure these success factors.

A conceptual model has therefore been constructed in order to visualize and simplify the link between the concepts and variables. Firstly the model shows sponsors and sponsees involved in sponsorships developing sponsorship relationships with each other. Thereafter the model visualizes the concepts commitment, communication and fit, which have been mentioned in previous literature as important success factors in sponsorship relationships. In order to achieve strong commitment in relationships mutual goals and shared values are variables mentioned as important to build strong commitment in relationships. Social bonding and frequent communication are variables revealed in the literature to be significant in order to create a solid communication within relationships. It is also showed that communication influences the commitment in a relationship and therefore this connection is visualized as well. Lastly, it has been shown that brand associations and brand image affects the level of fit between a sponsor and its sponsee. According to the literature all these concepts and variables combined will lead to satisfaction within sponsorship relationships.
The conceptual model in figure 3.1 that is illustrated below visualizes how the theoretical concepts are linked together.

Figure 3.1 Conceptual Model
3.2 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework model has been developed in order to see connections between the concepts and the concepts variables. The model illustrates the concepts, and its conceptual and operational definitions. This model is illustrated in table 3.1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Conceptual Definition</th>
<th>Operational Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Relationship communication is defined as the sharing of meaning and timely information by using formal and informal means. Anderson and Weitz (1992).</td>
<td>Communication is a key concept in sponsorship relationships, and can be explained in the variables: Frequent Communication and Social Bonding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Commitment in sponsorship relationships is defined as how prepared the parties within the relationship are to make short-term investments in order to carry out long-term benefits from that relationship. (Farrelly and Quester 2005b).</td>
<td>Commitment is a key concept in sponsorship relationships, and can be explained in the variables: Shared Values and Mutual Goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fit</td>
<td>Fit is defined as partners fit together if there is a degree of consistency between partnership expectations and brand schemas. (Jagre et al. 2001).</td>
<td>Fit is a key concept in sponsorship relationships and can be explained in the variables: Brand Associations and Brand Image.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1 Conceptual Framework
4 Methodology

In this chapter the research methodology and approach will be presented. The Research Approach, Research Design, Data Sources, Research Strategy, Data Collection Method, Data Collection Instrument, Sampling, Data Analysis Method and Quality Criteria are described in a theoretical way. The authors of the research also justify the selected concepts.

4.1 Research Approach

According to Bryman and Bell (2005) there are two different methods of relating to theory within social scientific research. The different approaches that have to be considered are deductive and inductive. What separates them is how the researcher considers the relationship between theory and empirical findings, and also in what role the theories have in the research. There are also two different methodology approaches within social science regarding information collection; these are quantitative and qualitative research methods. What separates quantitative and qualitative methods is the way of gathering data, which will be described further (Holme and Solvang 1997).

4.1.1 Deductive versus Inductive Research

Deductive research describes the general opinion of how the relation is between theory and empirical data within social science. With prior knowledge and theoretical considerations within an area, the researcher states hypothesis or research questions in order to submit an empirical investigation (Bryman and Bell 2005; Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005). Within the stated hypothesis or research question there must be concepts that could be translated in to eligible research phenomenon. It is significant that the researcher have the competence to deduce and translate the hypothesis or research question into operational terms in order to conduct the process correct (Bryman and Bell 2005; Holme and Solvang 1997). The gathered theories together with the stated hypothesis or research question control the process of data collection, which will end up with a result where the hypothesis will be confirmed/rejected or answer the research question. Lastly the theories will be revised which means that the researcher
compare the result with the used theories and the prior knowledge within the area (Ibid). This process is described in figure 4.1 below:

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 4.1 Data Collection Process (Adapted from: Bryman and Bell 2005:23)**

Inductive research approach is the opposite of deductive research approach in the way that the inductive research uses the result to generate theory. The inductive process signifies that general conclusions could be drawn based by observations. Inductive approach is the most time consuming way since the researcher does not have any prior research to make assumptions from, which makes the researcher seek for new theory (Bryman and Bell 2005; Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005).

This research is based upon a deductive approach. The research started with seeking for relevant theories that deals with different concepts regarding sponsorship relationships. The selected theories was faced against the empirical findings in the shape of an analysis in order to see if the theories and empirical findings were consistent as well as contribute to reduce the existing research gaps.
4.1.2 Quantitative versus Qualitative Research

The quantitative research method describes the collection of numerical data that are expected to be measurable and presentable in the way of numbers and statistics. The quantitative method approaches the research from a broad perspective, and the purpose is to make generalizations that are built upon the research processed results. This way of conducting a research is structured, controlled and formalized, with few variables but a large number of objects used. In order for a concept to be used in a quantitative research it has to be measurable in some way. When this demand is fulfilled, a concept is able to take place as dependent or independent variables (Bryman and Bell 2005; Holme and Solvang 1997). The general approach when conducting a quantitative research is to deduce a hypothesis from selected theory. The stated hypothesis will have its arise from the research selected theories and this will create the foundation for a quantitative research (Bryman and Bell 2005).

The qualitative research method is less formalized as to compare with the quantitative method and has its aim towards collecting data in forms of words, instead of numerical data. The reason behind this lies in the interest of researching complicated situations such as how humans perceive, react and understand things, this to get a deeper understanding of the research phenomena. Since the main purpose of qualitative research is to get a deeper understanding of a research phenomenon, there is no need of drawing general conclusions (Bryman and Bell 2005; Holme and Solvang 1997). Common ways of conducting qualitative research are for example by doing observations and/or interviews in order to gather deeper and more detailed data (Bryman and Bell 2005).

Due to the stated purpose and research questions this research have a qualitative method approach. The reason behind this choice of a qualitative approach is to get a deeper understanding of how the relationship functions between a sponsee and its sponsors, as well as analyze and interpret the empirical findings. A minor sample was investigated which made it possible to
penetrate deeper, look at more variables and get a complete picture and not to draw general conclusions.

4.2 Research Design

Research design is the plan that needs to be followed in order to answer the research questions and fulfill the purpose of a study. Research design provides the framework to reach these objectives. The choice of research design will reflect and influence a vast amount of research activities that is to be followed. There are three general research designs, exploratory research, descriptive research and causal research (Aaker 2011). A description of these three is further presented.

Exploratory research design could be defined as “potentially useful knowledge-building in a new or lonely area.” (Beall 2002:26). The execution of an exploratory research is conducted at an early stage of problem definition, when few or even non investigation has been made in the particular area and therefor data is challenging to collect (Aaker 2011; Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005). The aim with exploratory research design is to increase the understanding, knowledge and to clarify the research problem and the direction of the research. This kind of research design is suitable when the problem has not yet been distinctly defined, and the researcher is interested in obtaining knowledge about a concept or problem that is to be investigated (Aaker 2011). Exploratory research is often highly flexible, unstructured and have a qualitative approach since the researcher have no solid preconceptions of what to find when the research is executed (Aaker 2011; Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005). There exits a variety of approaches when conducting an exploratory research, interviews, focus groups, pilot studies and case studies are all common when conducting an exploratory research. One alternative use of exploratory research is when concepts are tested before placing them on marketplaces, one way of conducting it is to provide consumers with prototypes or a written concept of a new product or service (Aaker 2011).
Descriptive research design is used when answering the five basic W questions; who, why, when, what, and where, however it is important to remember that descriptive design also answer questions including the term how. Descriptive design could be used when analyzing trends and patterns or generating hypothesis (Christensen et al 2010; Grimes and Schulz 2002). Grimes and Schulz (2002) further explains that descriptive research design could be divided into two main groups, studies that relate to entire populations and those that deal with individuals. This kind of research design could be suitable if one have good knowledge about a marketing problem or market situation but there is a lack of an updated, clear picture. In order to be able to describe market phenomena it is essential to have a good insight of the subject (Christensen et al 2010; Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005). Christensen et al (2010) stresses that most of the conducted market investigations have a descriptive design due to the fact that a phenomena should be described, or generate hypothesis of the reason behind something or even predict the result of something. Descriptive research can involve collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, the quantitative collection is used when generating hypothesizes and the qualitative collection is relevant when analyzing trends and patterns (Christensen et al 2010; Grimes and Schulz 2002).

A causal research investigates if one variable causes or determines the value of another variable. Causal design is appropriate when the researcher has good understanding and a clear view of the phenomena that is to be investigated, but the researcher is interested of why the phenomena function as it does. The aim with a causal research is to explain why something occurred; the majority of causal researches investigate the causal connection of reasons between different variables (Christensen et al 2010; Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005; Jacobsen 2002). Christensen et al (2010) present an example of investigating if loyal customers (independent variable) lead to increased profitability (dependent variable). By changing the independent variable it is possibly to investigate how the dependent variable changes. In order to be able to conduct a causal research the investigator must be aware of what variable or variables that affects the dependent variable (Christensen et al 2010).
Exploratory research design was rejected for this study considering it is only of interest when few or non investigation has been made in a particular area before. Casual design was also rejected since this research does not intend to investigate if one variable causes or determines the value of another variable. This research has a descriptive design, since the stated purpose of this research aims towards investigating and gaining a deeper understanding of the relationship between a sponsee and its sponsors. Another factor to why descriptive design was chosen is due to the fact that the research questions includes the terms of how and why, and that the descriptive design analyzing patterns which is relevant for this study.

4.3 Data Sources
There are two different kinds of data sources; these are primary and secondary data collection. Primary data is information collected first-handed by the researcher directly from the original source, while secondary data is information and statistical findings collected by others such as researchers, organizations and statistical institutes (Bryman and Bell 2005). These two are further explained below.

Primary data is information gathered by the researcher directly from original sources, often by constructed interviews, observations or surveys with the aim of answering the stated research questions. There are some drawbacks with primary data collection, such as it is time-consuming, costly and the risk of receiving non-valuable answers or not receiving the expected amount of survey replies. However there are also benefits with primary data collection such as, the opportunity of gathering tailor-made information for your research. Primary data collection also provides the researcher with up-to-date and specific information (Bryman and Bell 2005).

Secondary data is information and statistical data that other researchers have collected. The purpose of the gathered secondary data does not necessarily need to be in order with the purpose at hand.
There are two types of secondary data, internal secondary data and external secondary data. Internal secondary data is information such as annual reports, internal communication documents and sales reports. While external secondary data is information data gathered from sources such as social medias and news reports. Just as with primary data collection there are some drawbacks and benefits with secondary data collection as well. Some of the drawbacks are that it might be a lack of both availability and relevance with the collected data. There is also a risk of insufficiency and inaccuracy. Some benefits with secondary data are that it might provide alternatives for the primary research methods and it can provide essential background information and build creativity for the research project. It is also considered to be a cheap and relatively simple method to conduct (Bryman and Bell 2005).

This research is based upon both primary and secondary data. The primary data consists of the data collected from the interview with the sponsee and its sponsors, while the secondary data consists of the selected theories that are related to this research as well as background information relevant for this research.

4.4 Research Strategy
According to Yin (2009) there are five various strategies that a research could be based upon; these are Experiment, Survey, Archival Analysis, History and Case Studies.

Experimental methods are processes with the aim of confirming, rejecting or ascertain the validity of a hypothesis whereby one or more variables are reformed to establish the differing outcomes (Yin 2009).Experimental methods can arise both within a laboratory and as a field setting such as a social experiment. Laboratory experiment might focuses on one or two variables, as compared to social experiments that have its focus on entire groups of people in various ways.
The goal of experiments is reached when a researcher are able to directly, precisely and systematically manipulate the respondents behavior (Ibid).

Survey design strategy implicates that data is collected not just from a single source, but often a great amount of data sources is collected at a certain point. The purpose of a survey design is to use a sample of a population, such as individuals, families or organizations, in order to view a set of quantitative or quantifiable data related to two or more variables, in most cases much more then two variables. These sources and variables are reviewed in order to detect patterns in various kinds of connections. Common ways of conducting a survey design is by using structured interviews and questionnaires. When using this strategy there is a need to consider a lot of cases and variables in order to get a broad perspective and detect patterns (Bryman and Bell 2005).

Archival strategy is an observation method where the researcher examines collected documents, or archives. The archival strategy is a relatively cheap strategy that focuses on gathering secondary data. When conducting an archival analysis it is important to take into consideration that the data is collected by another author with another purpose, therefore the usefulness and accuracy must be evaluated for the new research (Yin 2009).

History is a common strategic method that is used for a research when there is practically no access or control to actual behavioral proceedings, in other words history are up for use when for example investigating the past and there is no person alive who can provide relevant information. The researcher must therefore rely on documents, both primary and secondary, as well as cultural and physical objects (Yin 2009).

Characterizes of case studies are that they are used to study single-handed or few objects in diverse aspects in a deep and detailed way. E.g. the researcher could chose to study a certain industry, company, organization or even an individual human (Bryman and Bell 2005; Eriksson and Wiedersheim-Paul 2011). Yin (2009) stresses that there is no other research strategy that answers
questions of why and how as well as case studies. Yin (2009) further explains that case studies can be divided into single and multiple-case studies. The difference lies in that a single case study only focus on an individual entity while the multiple case study give the researcher the opportunity to compare different entities since multiple case studies includes more than one entity. Yin (2009) explains that a single case study goes further in depth compared to a multiple-case study, however a multiple-case study give the researcher the opportunity to make comparisons between the different cases and a multiple case study is also regarded to be more convincing and strong then a single case study. Researchers often use a qualitative approach when conducting a case study since unstructured and semi-structured interviews is considered to fulfill their function when performing a case study (Ibid).

When selecting which strategic method to apply for the research, three aspects have to be considered. The first aspects to consider is how the research question/questions are formed, secondly the degree of control the researcher actually has over behavioral events, and lastly, the extent of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events.

The table 4.1 below further explains how these three aspects are related to the five prior mentioned research strategies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Form of Research Question</th>
<th>Requires Control over Behavioral Events</th>
<th>Focuses on Contemporary Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>How, Why?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Who, What, Where, How many, How much?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival Analysis</td>
<td>Who, What, Where, How many, How much?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>How, Why?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>How, Why?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 Relevance Model for Research Methods (Adapted from: Yin 2009:8)

By inspecting the research questions for this research one can observe that they include the terms “what” and “how”, and when comparing these to Yin’s (2009) model it is clear that all five strategies could be applied. However the research is not able to control over behavioral events thus, experimental strategy was rejected.

Surveys are most suitable when investigating a lot of units and a lot of variables, and since surveys does not penetrate a phenomena deeply it was rejected for this research due to the stated purpose.

Archival analysis strategy is a cheap and relatively simple strategy to conduct. However, archival analysis deals with gathering secondary data collected for another purpose. In order to gather tailor-made, up-to-date and truthful data that gives this research validity the use of primary data is required, therefore archival analysis was rejected since it only deals with secondary data. History was rejected when considering that the research is focusing on how the relationship is between a sponsee and its sponsors at present time, and not how it was in the past.
Case studies are the most suitable strategy for this research's stated purpose, due to the fact that the stated purpose takes a quite high level of variables into account, as well as case studies are the best-suited strategy when investigating how and why questions (Yin 2009). Case studies are suitable for researches that includes few units and a lot of variables, this to get a deep and detailed view of the research phenomena (Ibid).

To clarify, this research is a multiple case study, which will investigate a sponsee and its sponsors relationships, in order to find similarities, differences and make comparisons between the cases. The various variables are investigated on a deep and detailed level, as well as the opportunity of comparison between the different cases is used.

4.5 Data Collection Method
According to Yin (2009) there are six common data collection methods when conducting a case study; these are Documentation, Archival Records, Interviews, Direct Observation, Participant Observation and Physical Artifacts. Yin (2009) further states that no single method is superior over all the others; however including all these methods could be quite extensive.

Documentation is according to Yin (2009) likely to be relevant for every case study and can take a vide variety of forms such as; letters, e-mail correspondence, notes, and news clippings, just to mention a few.

The sources of archival records could be both qualitative and quantitative, some examples of this are; statistical data made available by state or local governments, organizational records, and displaying maps and charts (Ibid).

An observation involves a researcher that monitors some relevant behavior or environmental conditions without interfere with the actual situation. Yin (2009) further states that there exist two kinds of observations; direct observation and participant-observation. Observations of meetings, factory work, and sidewalk
activities are all parts of direct observation. This provides the researcher the chance to evaluate occasions of certain types of behavior during certain time span in the field. When executing a participant observation the researcher has a more active role and might actually even participate in events that are studied. This kind of data collection method is very time consuming (Ibid).

Physical or cultural artifact could for instance be a tool, an instrument, a work of art or some other physical evidence (Yin 2009). Yin (2009) explains that physical artifacts have a minor potential relevance in most typical case studies.

Bryman (2011) stresses that interview is likely to be the most common way of collecting data within qualitative research, and Bryman (2011) mention flexibility and adaptability as two of the aspects that makes interviews highly attractive. Interviews give the interviewer the possibility to ask the respondents questions regarding both facts as well as what the respondents personal opinion is. The more a respondent assists with information to an interview, the more vital role wills the respondent have for the result of the case study (Yin 2009).

There are three categories of interviews, unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviews. What differs between unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviews is the level of structure within the interviews. A survey investigation is the most frequent when conducting a structured interview and is mostly used in quantitative researches (Bryman 2011). Unstructured interviews often deal with just one single question, and the interview is very similar to a regular conversation. When conducting an unstructured interview the interviewer does not use an interview-guide, just a note to help the interviewer to remember the current theme, at the most (Bryman 2011; Bryman and Bell 2005). While in semi-structured interviews the researcher uses an interview guide where a certain number of subjects and questions will be mentioned, and from these the respondents will answer freely (Bryman and Bell 2005).
There are some drawbacks to consider when conducting interviews. First of all compared to many other data collection methods interviews are seemed to be costly and time consuming. Another drawback is that interviews requires talented experienced interviewers with certain skills that follow the interview guide, and asks the interview questions in an unbiased way. Two different kinds of biases are social desirability bias and interviewer bias. Social desirability bias could be explained, as when conducting an interview the respondent answer what they think is favorable for the interviewer, (Nederhof 1985), and interviewer bias could be described as when the interviewer leads the respondent towards a particular answer (Delgado-Rodríguez and Llorca 2004).

Despite the drawbacks there are some advantages with conducting interviews as well. Interviews are flexible and give the interviewer the possibility to collect deep and detailed information from the respondent. Interviews are the best-suited data collection method when the interviewer is penetrating for the respondent's beliefs, values and attitudes, as well as penetrating to discover unknown issues. Interviews include an interaction between the interviewer and the respondent, often face to face. This interaction gives the interviewer the chance to interpret the respondent's body language and facial expressions, which will add extra value to the interview (Yin 2009).

From these six described data collection methods two was accepted and four rejected. The rejected methods are: Archival records, physical artifacts, and direct and participant observation. Archival since it deals with quantitative data, and this research deals with qualitative data. Physical artifacts were to be rejected since it concern cultural or physical evidences, and due to the stated purpose there is no need to evaluate these kind of objects. The reason for rejecting direct and participant observation is that they are very time consuming and the risk of bias (Yin 2009) such as the Hawthorne effect, which means that subject observed improves or modify their behavior when studied (Jones 1992).

The remaining two methods that are included in this research is therefore, documentation and interviews.
The method of documentation is used in this research when dealing with relevant documents such as e-mail corresponding and notes in order to collect valuable data. One major reason for why interviews are chosen as a data collection method in this research is since interviews is one of the most essential sources of case study data (Yin 2009). Other reasons for why interviews are chosen as data collection method is since it supplies the research with tailor-made, up-to-date and specific information that is needed in order to solve the research questions and reach the stated purpose. Lastly when delimit the interview structure, structured and unstructured interviews was rejected since semi-structured interviews gives the researchers the opportunity to ask follow up questions, give the respondents a chance to speak freely and are best suited when more then one question needs to be investigated (Bryman and Bell 2005).

4.6 Data Collection Instrument

4.6.1 Operationalization and Measurement of Variables

Operationalization means bringing concepts out of theory, concepts that the research later will have its focus on. The defined concepts shall consist with the theory the concepts are gathered from, where the concepts should relate both to other concepts used in the research but also to other known concepts within the theory (Eliasson 2010). Operationalization is also used to make concepts measurable, which means that by using any kind of data collection method such as questionnaires, interviews or observations the concepts can be measured. It is essential to make sure that the researchers own opinions and definitions of the studied concepts is consistent with the studied concepts in order to avoid misunderstandings with the respondents when conducting the data collection.

The research's defined concepts are also the variables that are used for the data collection. Therefore the variables must fulfill some requirements in order to make the research valid. Some of the requirements are that the variables needs to measure what they are supposed to measure, be relevant for the research purpose and also cover the research questions (Ibid).
An operationalization model was developed in order to make the research questions easier to measure. To explain the connections between the theoretical concepts and the questions asked during the interviews, the theoretical concepts have been transformed into tangible concepts.

The operationalization model is illustrated in table 4.2 below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Conceptual Definition</th>
<th>Example of Questions (See Appendix 1 and 2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Communication | • Social Bonding  
• Frequent Communication                                                                 | Could you elaborate how you communicate with the Swedish Skicross Team?  
What are important aspects in order to achieve a good communication? |
| Commitment | • Shared Values  
• Mutual Goals                                                                                                           | What are your objectives with the sponsorship relationship you have with the Swedish Skicross Team?  
Do you have any mutual goals together with the Swedish Skicross Team? |
| Fit        | • Brand Associations  
• Brand Image                                                                                                             | Do you see any similarities between your company and the Swedish Skicross Team?  
What traits does the Swedish Skicross Team possess that makes them attractive to sponsor? |

Table 4.2 Operationalization Model
4.6.2 Interview Guide

An interview-guide is a script that structures the interview process, where the level of interview structure depends on what kind of interview that is conducted (Kvale 2009). Since this research has a semi-structured interview approach the interview-guide contain an overview of topics and suggestions for interview questions. Kvale (2009) further stresses that researchers conducting a semi-structured interview decides in advance how strictly they will follow the interview-guide and in which way the respondent’s answers will be followed up. For this research the respondents had the opportunity to respond and answer freely to the interview questions, while the interview-guide was used as a helping tool for the researchers in order to remember the most essential topics and guide the respondents through the interview without influencing their answers. According to Kvale (2009) interviews differs regarding the openness about the research purpose. The interviewers can start the interview by explaining the research purpose and ask direct questions, or chose to start the interview by asking indirect questions and explain the research purpose at the end of the interview.

Trost (2010) discusses the importance of having skilled interviewers when conducting a semi-structured interview. He further stresses the importance for the interviewers of being prepared before conducting the interview. The researcher needs to know exactly how the interview-guide looks like and which questions to ask. Therefore the researchers of this study had a clear picture of the topic and questions asked before the interview was conducted. Recording the interviews is a tool used in this research for simplifying the interview process and data analysis process. Despite drawbacks such as it is time consuming to analyze recorded data and that recorded interviews might make the respondents feel uncomfortable, recorded interviews is still considered to be a helpful tool for the researchers. Advantages with having recorded interviews are for example that it gives the researchers the possibilities to listen to the respondents voice tone and selections of words additional times after the interview. Another advantage is that the interviewers don’t have to take any notes from the
interview; instead they can focus on asking questions, observing the respondents body language and listen to the respondents answers (Ibid).

For this research two interview guides was conducted, one for the sponsors, and one for the sponsee. See appendix 1 for the interview guide adapted for the sponsors and appendix 2 for the interview guide adapted for the sponsee.

4.6.3 Pretesting

According to Yin (2009) pretesting is the time when the researcher performs a formal practice test in which the data collection plan is used as the final plan as faithfully as possible. By pretesting the interview questions the researcher will be able to discover questions that the respondents may experience as hard or sensitive to answer. The researchers also gets the opportunity to change the order for the questions asked, and also make sure that the respondents gets sufficient information about the interview purpose before they start answering the interview questions (Bryman and Bell 2005).

For this research the interview questions where pretested by the researchers supervisor, potential respondents as well as peer students in the seminar group in order to secure that the questions asked during the interviews where relevant for the research purpose. The pretest where also conducted to make sure that the questions where understandable and well formulated.

4.7 Sampling

Population is described as all the units that belong to the same group and/or exits in the same geographical area (Bryman and Bell 2011). When considering that, the population for this research is all organizations that act like a sponsee, and all the organizations that act like a sponsor. I.e. all organizations that receive some kind of funds for a counter performance, and all organizations that offers these kinds of funds (Ibid). Two different sampling methods that could be used when collecting and analyzing data is census and sample survey. Census is when data are collected and analyzed from every unit of a population, while sample
survey use a representative proportion of the population in order to collect and analyze data (Ibid). The reason for why this research use sample survey and reject census as a sampling method is because it is impossible to investigate the entire population, due to time and monetary.

4.7.1 Sampling Frame

A sampling frame is the listing of all entities in the population from which the sample will be gathered. There are several available methods when deciding the sampling size for a research, methods such as looking at how big sample size similar previous research have used or deciding the sample size depending on how much you can afford are two examples (Bryman 2011).

The justification of the chosen sample frame is based upon the research purpose, research questions, literature review and the researchers own interest. When considering the purpose for this research the selected sample frame is large sports organizations since they are frequently active within sponsoring and as presented in this research’s background chapter sports organizations is highly represented within sponsorship relationships. Another aspect considered when selecting the sample frame was the researchers interest of sports and sports organizations. The choice of sponsee organization also delimited available sponsor organizations.

4.7.2 Sampling Selection

From the selected sample frame one sponsee organization and two of their sponsors were chosen. The organizations where chosen through convenience sampling since one of the researchers had a personal contact within the sponsee organization. The sponsee organization chosen as sample for this research were therefore the Swedish Skicross Team and the two sponsoring organizations were Samsung and Tenson which where selected with help of the Swedish Skicross Team.
The selection of respondents for the research is highly essential, if not the correct respondents is selected the validity of the research will decrease (Holme and Solvang 1997). Therefore this research has used respondents with a large competence and knowledge within the area of interest. The chosen respondents for this research held positions as Swedish Marketing Manager, Channel Marketing Manager, Sports General Manager and Marketing Manager.

4.8 Data Analysis Method

Data analysis consists of five steps, examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing and recombining evidence of the collected qualitative data (Yin 2009). Yin (2009) further argues that every case study should contain a general analytic strategy that is followed, in order to clarify what should be analyzed, and why. Goetz and LeCompe (1981) further states that an absence of an analytic strategy could lead to that researchers with high quality data ground their recollection of data without supporting the discussion.

The purpose with analyzing the collected data is to answer the stated research questions. Due to the fact that this is a multiple case study the collected data from every individual case, and between the cases will be analyzed and compared in order to find regularities, irregularities and patterns. The selected data analysis methods for this research are data reduction and pattern matching.

Data reduction is a method of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the collected data that appear in notes and transcriptions (Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005). The aim of data reduction is to screen irrelevant data in order to simplify and categorizing the process of conclusion drawing (Yin 2009). Pattern matching is according to Yin (2009) one of the best-suited techniques to use for case studies. The procedure of pattern matching exists of deciding what things means, notice regularities, irregularities, detect patterns, make propositions, back up claims with empirical findings and make comparisons with the theoretical framework and previous investigations that have been executed.
The aim with pattern matching is to find patterns and draw conclusions, in order to be able to conduct pattern matching; data reduction must be executed before.

By using these two data analysis methods the analyzing process consists of four steps; transcribe, data reduction, data display and pattern matching/conclusion drawing (Ibid).

The first step, transcribe, refers to the process where the collected recorded data is transformed into words (McLellan et al 2003). For this research this first step was conducted in the way that the recorded data from the interviews where transcribed into words as soon as possible after the interview, while the interview where still fresh for the researchers. The next step is data reduction, which is the process of selecting, simplifying, abstracting and coding the relevant data (Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005). For this research this means that the researchers excluded irrelevant data and coded the relevant transcribed data in order to make it easier when continuing analyzing the data. The third step, data display, is to display the reduced data and compress and organize it, which allows the conclusion drawing to be conducted. Tables and matrices are attributes that contribute to an easy conclusion drawing (Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005). In order to simplify the conclusion drawing and pattern matching the researchers of this study used tables and figures in order to display how frequently the different operationalized concepts occurred during the interviews. Lastly, the fourth step is pattern matching/conclusion drawing which is the procedure where the researcher decides what things mean, notice regularities, irregularities, detect patterns, make propositions, back up claims with empirical findings and make comparisons with the theoretical framework and previous investigations that have been executed (Yin 2009). In this last step the researchers of this study made comparisons between the cases and noticed similarities, differences and visualized patterns. This enabled the conclusion drawing.
4.9 Quality Criteria

Two of the most essential concepts when evaluating researches within social science are Reliability and Validity. Reliability is described as if the results from one investigation were replicated the result should be the same, and validity is described as how well the measurement measures what it is intended to measure (Bryman and Bell 2005). Within quality criteria there are four concepts that will be further explained, Content Validity, Construct Validity, External Validity and Reliability.

4.9.1 Content Validity

Content Validity is described as how well measurement construct’s components actually represent that construct (Bryman and Bell 2011; Haynes et al 1995). In order to increase a research content validity, experts and potential respondents could be used to judge the representativeness of a measure before the main data collection takes place (Bryman and Bell 2011).

To guarantee that the content validity is sufficient for this research, an expert within the field, potential respondents for this chosen case as well as students in the seminar group has viewed the operationalized interview guide in order to increase its quality.

4.9.2 Construct Validity

Construct validity is described as to which extent an operationalization measures the concept that it is intend to measure (Haynes et al 1995). Yin (2009) describes three tactics of increasing the construct validity of a case study. The first one mentioned is to use multiple sources for evidence, which is relevant during the data collecting process. Secondly another tactic that is relevant during the data collection process is mentioned, a tactic of establishing a chain of evidence, which means that an external observer should be able to trace every step in every direction throughout the entire case study. The third tactic is related to the case studies overall quality where the procedure is to have the
draft case study report reviewed by key informants, both peers and by the participants and informants in the case study (Yin 2009).

To strengthen the construct validity for this research all three tactics that Yin (2009) mentioned has been conducted. The first tactic that where fulfilled where the use of multiple source of evidence which also is called triangulation, to be more specific the use of documentation and interviews as data collection methods. Chain of evidence has been established in the sense of having strict referencing, recorded interviews and by saving original transcripts that is available upon request. Lastly, letting key informants view drafts of the case study fulfilled the third tactic. Drafts of the research have been reviewed by key informants such as a supervisor and by other students within the seminar group during the entire process with the aim of increasing the construct validity. In order to avoid bias in the sense of a pre-determent answer and to increase the level of construct validity the interview questions were not showed to the respondents prior to the actual interview. To further strengthen the construct validity the respondents were carefully selected in order to guarantee as correct and valuable data as possible. Another problem that could decrease the construct validity was that the interviews were conducted in Swedish, which could have lead to misunderstandings when transcribing the data. To avoid this the procedure of back-translation was executed, which means that one person translate the interview questions and answers one way and another person afterwards translate the data back to the origin language. If the back-translated data matches, the validity stands; otherwise a second back-translation is conducted (Chapman and Carter 1979).

4.9.3 External Validity

External Validity considers to which extend the case studies results can be generalized to other social environments and situations (Yin 2009). E.g. If a study examines one neighborhood, are the results then valid to another neighborhood? One drawback when conducting case studies is that single cases provide a poor basis for drawing generalization, which gives a decreased
external validity. In order to increase the external validity for a multiple-case study it is important to use replication logic in multiple-case studies, which means that by using theory to define other cases to which the conclusions of one case can be generalized (Ibid).

Another important factor is to test a theory through replication of findings in comparable environments, where the theory has specified that the same result should appear (Ibid).

Since this research is a multiple-case study with four cases studied, the external validity is considered fairly low. No generalizations of conclusions could be established, either could any replication be conducted considering the low amount of cases.

### 4.9.4 Reliability

Yin (2009) describes reliability as if a later researcher follows the same procedures as another researcher already have done and conduct the same case study over again, the second researcher should come up with the same conclusions and findings as the first researcher did. The aim of reliability is to minimize mistakes and biases in a research (Trost 2010; Yin 2009). In order to increase the reliability for a case study, the use of different tactics during the data collection process is explained. By using a case study protocol, develop a case study database, using multiple case studies and/or by repeating the study at a later point of time the reliability of the study could increase (Yin 2009).

For this research case study protocol, case study database and repeat the study at a later point of time was not conducted. However to increase the reliability for this research the original transcriptions together with the recorded interviews is available upon request. To avoid biases of different kinds the interviewers have gathered certain skills and knowledge by reading peer-reviewed articles and interview textbooks. Also the researchers made sure that the respondents from each case are the most suited ones for providing the researchers with as valuable
data as possible. Lastly, the respondents did not have the possibility to see the questions in advance, since this could lead to predetermined answers and bias.
4.10 Chapter Summary

Throughout this entire methodology chapter all aspects of how data was collected has been discussed. The discussion started with deciding the research approach, continued on with deciding research design, data sources, research strategy, data collection method and ends up with the sample selection and data analysis. In figure 4.2 the procedure is further explained.

![Methodology Diagram]

Figure 4.2 Methodology Summary
5 Empirical Findings

In this chapter the empirical data is collected in order to answer the research questions for this research. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, interviews where conducted in order to collect the data, one interview for each case study. The organizations included in the empirical chapter are the sports organization the Swedish Skicross Team, the clothing company Tenson and the electronic company Samsung. A general presentation of each case and organization respondents will first be presented; thereafter the identified success factors for each case are presented and lastly in what way these success factors are ensured in each case is presented.

5.1 Case one - The Swedish Skicross Team’s relationship with Samsung

The Swedish Skicross Team is a national sport organization that operates under the international ski federation (FIS). FIS was founded in 1924 and other examples of sports besides Skicross that operates within FIS is alpine skiing, ski-jumping and cross country skiing. Skicross is a sport that started in the United States during the 1990’s. The Swedish Skicross Team organization was founded in 2005, and it was also this year the Swedish Skicross Team became a part of (FIS). The year 2010 Skicross became an Olympic sport, as it was included in the winter Olympics held in Vancouver, Canada. The Swedish Skicross Team´s goal and vision is divided into both goals concerning the athletes’ achievements, and goals concerning the development of the sport in Sweden. When considering the athletes achievements the goal is to win a gold-medal at the Olympic Games 2014 in Sochi, Russia, and when looking at how the sport is developing the goal is to increase the amount of active Skicross racers and also to make more people interested of the sport. The Swedish Skicross Team consists of a general manager, national manager, federation captain, two Skicross trainers (one responsible for the national team, and one responsible for the upcoming team), a serviceman and physiotherapists.
The respondent representing the Swedish Skicross Team was Tommy Eliasson who is the general manager for the Swedish Skicross Team. Eliasson is situated at the organizations head office in Östersund, but is frequently traveling around the world with the Swedish Skicross Team. Before Eliasson became the organizations general manager he was a successful Skicross athlete that 2005 became the organizations federation captain and as mentioned now is the general manager for the Swedish Skicross Team. Eliassons job assignment as the Swedish Skicross Team’s general manager is among others to be responsible for all international and national activities, all the financing and also to be responsible for all political decisions that involves the Swedish Skicross Team and the development of Swedish Skicross.

5.1.1 General reasons for being active within sponsorship relationships
The main reason for why the Swedish Skicross Team is active within sponsorship relationships is described by the general manager to be the need of financial support for the national team’s activities and the development of the sport. The general manager says that the development of the sport is important for the organizations future expansion, and if The Swedish Skicross Team are going to be able to tie good sponsorship relationships in the coming years the development of the sport has to be good the general manager says. Another reason that the respondent mention is the possibilities to be used by the sponsors as a communication channel that hopefully can lead to new potential sponsorship relationships. The general manager explains that the Swedish Skicross Team is a relatively young and small organization, and that they therefor are missing some experience, knowledge and power those larger organizations possesses. This is another reason for why they are active within
sponsorship relationships. According to the general manager companies that are more experienced, have larger organizations and more power are able to help the Swedish Skicross Team with certain things by offering their experience and knowledge.

5.1.2 Identified success factors within the sponsorship relationship between the Swedish Skicross Team and Samsung

The general manager mentioned four factors that he considered being vital in order to have a successful relationship. These four mentioned factors where that Samsung is strong economically; the personal contact is solid, the communication is good and that Samsung have a very strong commitment in what they are doing. The first mentioned reason was something that the general manager described as an important factor for the development of the sport. It is important to have a strong company like Samsung that can supply the Swedish Skicross Team with capital, which is needed in order to expand both the national team and the sport. Samsung is described by the general manager as a potential engine for a new sport, which means that with the help of Samsung the sport have the potential to grow. The general manager further stresses that Samsung is a rich company that possess both capital and knowledge power, and these are factors that contribute in building the strong relationship that the Swedish Skicross Team has with Samsung. The general manager gives a few examples of how the relationship between the Swedish Skicross Team and Samsung are drawing advantages from this. First of all since Samsung has the possibility to contribute with capital and knowledge power, Samsung can use the Swedish Skicross Team as an effective communication tool to communicate their brand. When looking at which advantages the Swedish Skicross Team have drawn from the relationship with Samsung concerning this, the general manager mention advantages such as that Samsung as a rich multinational company have an enormous opportunity to communicate the Swedish Skicross Team, and by doing that the organization and the sport have a potential to grow.
The second vital success factor that the general manager mentioned was the solid personal relationship the Swedish Skicross Team has together with Samsung. The general manager says that a good personal relation is a key for having a successful relationship. The general manager further says that the first impression the Swedish Skicross Team got when meeting Samsung’s Swedish marketing manager Kalle Olsson was impressive. According to the general manager, Samsung’s Swedish marketing manager had a very healthy way of looking at things, and the Swedish marketing manager was also very familiar with what the Swedish Skicross Team where doing. The general manager says that all the representatives that the Swedish Skicross Team has been in contact with at Samsung have shown a genuine interest for the Swedish Skicross Team and the sport. The general manager further says that Samsung’s Swedish marketing manager always tries to bring up new ideas to discuss, which is something that is appreciated by the Swedish Skicross Team. The third mentioned factor goes hand in hand with a good personal relationship the general manager says. If the personal contact is solid in a relationship the communication have a great potential to be strong as well. As the general manager and Samsung’s Swedish marketing manager established a good personal relationship already at an early stage of the relationship, and this is something the general manager describes as a factor that has lead to that the communication between the Swedish Skicross Team and Samsung has been successful. The general manager mention that he has a steady contact with Samsung, and that they are in contact with each other weekly both by phone and mail. The general manager point the importance of also having a non-business contact, and here he gives the example of calling each other just to check if they had a great weekend for example. By doing this, relationships grow stronger according to the general manager.

The fourth and last mentioned factor that the general manager says leads to a successful relationship is that both parts show that they are committed in what they are doing. The general manager explains that, in the relationship the Swedish Skicross Team has with Samsung they never considered just to give Samsung the rights to the national team. Instead they reasoned about the rights
to a sport. And this is something the general manager mention as a factor that he is satisfied with in their relationship. Samsung wants to contribute to build and develop a new sport, and together with Samsung the Swedish Skicross Team have common goals concerning the development of the sport. The general manager says that the expectations the Swedish Skicross Team has on Samsung is that they are contributing to the relationship with ideas and engagement. The general manager mention that Samsung contributes with energy to their relationship and as the general manager express it: “What is fun with our relationship with Samsung is that they always are super happy when we meet, they always have the approach of showing that this is fun and something they really want to do.”

5.1.3 How the Swedish Skicross Team works to ensure these success factors with Samsung

The general manager says that it is hard to know exactly what the Swedish Skicross Team has to do in order to maintain the strong economically support that Samsung offers. However the general manager gives two examples of what the Swedish Skicross Team is currently doing in order to maintain the financial support. First of all they are doing their absolute best in order to help the athletes to accomplish good results at the Skicross races. The general manager says that if the results default there is always a risk for them to loose potential new sponsors, and already existing sponsors willingness to continue with their financial support. In order to avoid the risk of not accomplishing good results the Swedish Skicross Team are working in many different ways. One example of how they work in order to accomplish good results is by offering the athletes good training possibilities with professional staff helping them. Secondly, the general manager thinks the chance of ensuring a good financial support will increase if the Swedish Skicross Team shows strong engagement. Therefor the Swedish Skicross Team do their absolute best to show Samsung that they are doing all they can to accomplish their common goals. The general manager mentions various ways of how the Swedish Skicross Team shows their engagement. One example of how the Swedish Skicross Team are working in order to show their
engagement are that they always work on new ideas that can be beneficial for both parties in the relationship.

Concerning the personal contact the general manager says it is important to show each other that you have a genuine interest. The general manager further explains that when the Swedish Skicross Team where looking for a potential new sponsor they did a pretty strictly specification of what they where looking for. First the Swedish Skicross Team looked at which companies is big and strong enough to help building a sport and be a potential engine for a new sport. Then the Swedish Skicross Team looked at their contact network to see where they had potential inputs. Lastly the Swedish Skicross Team looked at what the potential sponsors wanted, what they where tempted of and if the potential sponsors had a genuine interest in skiing. By doing this the general manager explains that they had narrowed their options down, and at the end it was the personal relationship that mattered.

The general manager says that Samsung is a partner who always brings up new ideas to discuss, and that is something that the Swedish Skicross Team also is doing. The general manager gives an example where he says that both he and Samsung´s marketing manager can call each other late a Monday evening if they catch a new idea. The general manager further explains that it is important to have a friendly relationship with your partners. By calling Samsung’s representatives just to check how they are doing is something the general manager do in order to ensure a good friendly relationship.

In order to make sure that the Swedish Skicross Team fulfill Samsung’s expectations the general manager highlight the importance of having a steady continuous communication, and therefor a more or less daily communication has been established with Samsung. The general manager further says that by having a steady continuous communication both parts will be updated of what is happening. In the relationship between the Swedish Skicross Team and Samsung continuous meetings is held in order to ensure a good communication where both parts gets the chance to ask questions. The purpose of these meetings is
according to the general manager to ensure that both parts are satisfied with the relationship, but also to see if there are any rooms for improvements in the relationship. The general manager mention that one meeting was held in Branäs during the World Cup race in March 2012, and that the next meeting will be held during the spring 2012 in Stockholm. At these meetings all existing partners and some potential future partners are invited. One reason for why all existing and potential partners are invited at the same time is according to the general manager since the Swedish Skicross Team sees a potential collaboration between the sponsors as something that could be beneficial for all parts.

In order to ensure commitment in the relationship, the general manager first mentions that they have established common goals together. This, since it is significant that both parts in a relationship strives towards the same goals according to the general manager. An Olympic gold medal at the Olympic Games 2014 is one common goal; another is to make more people interested in the sport and a third common goal that the general manager mention is to perform an event in a city environment together with Samsung within the next two years. The general manager also mentions that it is important to give the sponsors access to information that not everybody knows about the sport and the national team. Therefor the Swedish Skicross Team gives Samsung access to athletes, World Cup races and access to how the Swedish Skicross Team is working when for example picking out skiers that are going to represent the national team. The general manager thinks this will raise Samsung’s commitment since the more Samsung knows the more they can engage in the relationship.

Lastly, the general manager mention that the Swedish Skicross Team now have some possibilities to go through with projects together with their sponsors. One example that the general manager talks about is the sponsor trips that the Swedish Skicross Team has arranged together with some of their sponsors. Samsung has for example been invited to follow the Swedish Skicross Team to three of their World Cup races. The general manager describes this to be a good way of ensuring a strong commitment in a relationship, since by having Samsung present at World Cup races both parts gets access to each other.
The figure below shows which success factors the Swedish Skicross Team sees in their sponsorship relationship with Samsung, and also in what way the Swedish Skicross Team is working in order to ensure these success factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Success Factors</th>
<th>Process of Ensuring Success Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Economically Strong</td>
<td>• Achieve good sporting results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Show engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Personal Contact</td>
<td>• Genuine interest of the other party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bring new ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Continually friendly communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication</td>
<td>• Steady weekly communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Continuous meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commitment</td>
<td>• Common goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Access to the sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sponsor trips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.1 Identified success factors, and process of ensuring success factors from the Swedish Skicross Team’s perspective in their relationship with Samsung.
5.2 Case two – The Swedish Skicross Team’s relationship with Tenson

5.2.1 Identified success factors within the sponsorship relationship between the Swedish Skicross Team and Tenson

The general manager says that since Tenson is a company that sells products that is closely related to the Skicross business one of the main purposes the Swedish Skicross Team has in the relationship with Tenson is to help them sell products, and also help Tenson with R&D. The Swedish Skicross Team can be used as a tool in order to help Tenson sell more jackets for example. This is according to the general manager one of the main success factors in their relationship with Tenson. This generates benefits to the relationship in the way that the Swedish Skicross Team can help Tenson reach out to a larger market with their products and also to communicate their brand together with the Swedish Skicross Team. Also by taking advice from the athletes Tenson has a great opportunity to improve their products. If Tenson reaches out to a larger market it will also generate advantages for the Swedish Skicross Team since Tenson are using them as a communication tool. The bigger market Tenson reach, the more aware people will be of the Swedish Skicross Team. The general manager further stresses that being involved in Tenson’s R&D are something that is beneficial for the Swedish Skicross Team, since Skicross is a sport where the material matters. If the athletes get the chance to influence Tenson with their R&D it might lead to that the athletes will reach better results.

The second factor the general manager highlights, as a success factor is the fact that both the Swedish Skicross Team and Tenson are organizations that are relatively small and developing. This is something the general manager sees as an opportunity for them to grow together. The general manager further stresses that it is not a coincident that the Swedish Skicross Team and Tenson is having a sponsorship relationship. According to the general manager Tenson wants to renew their brand a bit and since the Swedish Skicross Team is a relatively new and exciting organization both parts thinks this can help Tenson renewing their brand.
Regarding the communication between the Swedish Skicross Team and Tenson the general manager explains that one factor that increases the possibilities to have a good communication is the fact that Tenson is a Swedish company located relatively close to where the Swedish Skicross Team is situated. The general manager further make comparisons with previously experienced relationships the Swedish Skicross Team has had with other non-Swedish companies. The general manager mention that a relation with a Swedish company simplifies the communication since it enables them to visit the company more often, and that non-Swedish companies often are harder to influence. The general manager further says that good communication is continuously, and that in the relationship between The Swedish Skicross Team and Tenson a steady communication is established where they communicate weekly by phone and mail. According to the general manager it is not enough to send each other e-mails once a month if you want to have a good communication.

The last mentioned success factor that the general manager mention in the relation the Swedish Skicross Team has with Tenson is commitment. The general manager states: “Except the obvious that our sponsors helps us financing our work, the expectations is that the sponsors are as active and engaged as possible.”

The general manager believes that it is important that both parties in a sponsorship relationship has a positive attitude and shows a genuine interest of the other part in the relation. Tenson is according to the general manager a sponsor that contributes with energy and positive thoughts to their relationship. The general manager further explains commitment to be an important factor when building long-term relationships. With the relationship the Swedish Skicross Team has with Tenson, the general manager can not see any reasons for ending the relationship as long as the financial support and the commitment continues.
5.2.2 How the Swedish Skicross Team works to ensure these success factors with Tenson

The general manager describes in what way he thinks the Swedish Skicross Team best can help Tenson with R&D and reaching higher sales figures. In order to help Tenson sell more products the general manager says that the Swedish Skicross Team strives to be as good role models as possible and promote their products in a good way. The general manager also stresses the importance of reaching good results, and to get more exposure time in media. Another thing the Swedish Skicross Team are doing in order to help Tenson to reach higher sales figures is to promote Tenson’s products for the Swedish Skicross Team’s other partners, and also by being present at various arenas dressed in Tenson’s products.

In order to help Tenson with their R&D the Swedish Skicross Team gives Tenson access to their athletes in the way that Tenson are allowed to contact the athletes and ask them questions regarding their opinions about the products. Unfortunately though in these kinds of relationships there is a risk that the athletes wont give honest answers since Tenson helps the athletes fulfill their dreams and therefor it might be hard to say negative things about their products. In order to avoid this problem the Swedish Skicross Team has a contact person that are less involved compared to the athletes, that Tenson can contact in order to ask questions regarding their products.

When it comes to how the Swedish Skicross Team are working in order to have a steady development together with Tenson, and in what way the Swedish Skicross Team are going to help Tenson renewing their brand is hard to know exactly. However the general manager says that it is important that the Swedish Skicross Team and Tenson are working closely together and help each other with communicating the right message. Regarding how the Swedish Skicross Team is working in order to help Tenson renewing their brand the general manager says also here it is important that the Swedish Skicross Team is a good role model and exposure Tenson in the right way.
Since Tenson is a Swedish company located relatively close to where the Swedish Skicross Team is located continuous meetings is something the general manager describes to be something they have in order to ensure a good communication. Since Tenson is located relatively close it makes it easier for the Swedish Skicross Team to drop by and have a more spontaneous meeting compared to if the company is located in another country. The general manager also says that the Swedish Skicross Team is always reachable and that a steady weekly communication is upheld in order to improve the communication.

The general manager states that the Swedish Skicross Team is giving Tenson access to the athletes, access to what the Swedish Skicross Team is doing, and access to how the Swedish Skicross Team is working in order to raise both the Swedish Skicross Team’s and Tenson´s commitment in the relationship. The general manager says: "It will raise both parties interest of building a good relationship if both parts are informed and have access to information." Lastly The general manager mention that the Swedish Skicross Team invites Tenson to visit them on World Cup Races, where Tenson gets the chance to meet the athletes and get a better picture of how the athlete’s every-day looks like. This is something that the general manager explains to be a way to raise the commitment from Tenson but also from the Swedish Skicross Team.

The figure below shows which success factors the Swedish Skicross Team sees in their sponsorship relationship with Tenson, and also in what way the Swedish Skicross Team is working in order to ensure these success factors.
### Figure 5.2 Identified success factors, and process of ensuring success factors from the Swedish Skicross Team’s perspective in their relationship with Tenson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Success Factors</th>
<th>Process of Ensuring Success Factors</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Sell Products and R&amp;D</td>
<td>• Achieve good sporting results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Potential Growth and Renewing brand</td>
<td>• Role Models</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Communication</td>
<td>• Promote products</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Commitment</td>
<td>• Exposure Time</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Work closely together</td>
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<td>• Role Models</td>
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<td>• Exposure the brand</td>
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<td>• Steady weekly communication</td>
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<td>• Continuous meetings</td>
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<td>• Access to the sport</td>
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<td>• Sponsor trips</td>
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### 5.3 Case three – Samsung

Samsung Electronic Co, Ltd is a part of the cooperate group Samsung that was created in Taegu, Korea on March 1, 1938 (Samsung.com 2012-04-17a). At early stages Samsung was focusing on export, selling vegetables, fish and fruit. Nowadays Samsung consist of numeral different companies, Samsung Electronics, Samsung Engineering and Samsung Machinery & Heavy Industries to mention few of them, where Samsung Electronics Co, Ltd is considered to be their flagship Company (Ibid).

Samsung Electronics Co Ltd is a leading producer of TV, memory cards, mobile phones, monitors and tablets. The total amount of sales during 2010 was approximately 135,8 billions USD (Samsung.com 2012-04-17b).

Samsung Electronic is also the largest technology company in the world (It24.idg.se 2012-04-16). Samsung Electronics Nordic AB is a part of Samsung Electronics Co Ltd, Korea and during 2010 they had a turnover of 9,6 billion SEK.
Today Samsung Electronics Nordic AB (hereafter referred to as Samsung) has around 380 employees and offers the latest products within the mobile phone, TV, stereo, IT and kitchen appliances industry (Samsung.com 2012-04-17b).

The respondents representing Samsung was the Channel Marketing Manager Caroline Håård and Samsung’s Swedish Marketing Manager Kalle Olsson. Håård and Olsson are situated at Samsung’s Swedish head office located in Kista, Stockholm. Caroline Håård’s responsibilities as a Channel Marketing Manager at Samsung are foremost with the focus on sponsoring and events. Kalle Olsson’ has the main responsibility for all marketing divisions within Samsung Sweden.

5.3.1 **General reasons for being active within sponsorship relationships**

The marketing manager gives several reasons for why Samsung sponsor in general. The first reason is to reach a certain target group, or more specified a more accurate part within the target group. The second reason the marketing manager mentioned is to create stronger relationships with Samsung’s customers by offering an experience that cannot be bought. The marketing manager gave an example where Samsung invited representatives from some of their main customers to join Samsung when going to Switzerland and visits the Swedish Skicross Team at one of their World Cup races. The third motive is to tie associations that certain people have about Samsung and deepen their interest.

The fourth and perhaps the most important reason according to the marketing manager is to be able to tell a story which is connected to your brand. The marketing manager explains that Samsung needs to build their brand and build these certain values that Samsung wants to be connected with. The marketing
manager motivates this with saying that this is possible by doing commercial but it cost much more compared to sponsoring.

The marketing manager makes the comparison of a sponsorship with a real person. If a person only tells everyone about what he/she likes, not many people will be interested and care about that person. However, according to the marketing manager, if that person could engage and demonstrate what he/she thinks is fun by actually doing it, people will find that person interesting.

The marketing manager explains the importance of getting others to talk about what Samsung does. If Samsung can get a sponsee to talk about for example a project, that is far more valuable for Samsung compared to if Samsung themselves would go out and talk about it, then people would only view it as commercial. Lastly the marketing manager states that Samsung wants to be perceived as an innovative company with a modern design, and how they can paint this PR picture by sponsoring an organization or event.

Sometimes it is enough with only one reason to sponsor if it is strong enough and sometimes you need to combine all four reasons. The optimal is if you can combine all four reasons according to the marketing manager.

5.3.2 Identified success factors within the sponsorship relationship between Samsung and the Swedish Skicross Team

According to the marketing manager Samsung conducted a large mapping over their target group and it showed that a big part of the target group loved skiing. Therefore Samsung wanted to reach this target group and deepen their interest. According to the marketing manager The Swedish Skicross Team is a useful tool for Samsung in order to tie values and associations that Samsung want to be linked with. The marketing manager further argues that one of the most crucial factors is to build association together with the Swedish Skicross Team, since this creates trustworthiness for Samsung. The marketing manager says: “We
need to build our brand and build these certain values that we want to be connected with.”

The sponsorship relationship that Samsung has with the Swedish Skicross Team is a way for Samsung to create a relationship with those who like skiing and for Samsung to show that they are an active part of something that their target group enjoys. The marketing manager adds that Skicross feels interesting because it is a fun sport on its march forward, it is a great TV sport and Samsung sell TVs. According to the marketing manager Skicross matches Samsung’s personality of being youthful, cocky and forward, and this is one reason for why Samsung chose to sponsor the Swedish Skicross Team. All this together created a good match between Samsung and the Swedish Skicross Team and according to the marketing manager this is an essential factor within a sponsorship relationship.

The second success factor is that Skicross is a relatively young sport, still developing; Samsung saw an opportunity to be a part of developing the sport. The channel marketing manager explains that another very important factor for Samsung is that they have an ownership with the Swedish Skicross Team, which gives Samsung a larger influence and the possibility to make a difference. The marketing manager states that Samsung can help the sport to grow in the sense of increase the awareness and create a larger recruitment base for the Swedish Skicross Team. By doing this Samsung gets a larger marketing window within the right forum. According to the channel marketing manager it is easier for Samsung to push through their interests when working with a small organization like the Swedish Skicross Team and according to the marketing manager it is more fun to build something together.

The channel marketing manager stresses that the third crucial factor within a sponsorship relationship is the importance of having mutual goals; the marketing manager agrees and says that the target goal is extremely important. Samsung’s mutual goal with the Swedish Skicross Team is to develop the sport, create larger awareness, expand the sport and win an Olympic gold-medal in
Sochi, Russia 2014. The marketing manager explains that it is essential to have a mutual plan for where you are going and what you want to do. Samsung also tries to find projects together with the Swedish Skicross Team that is beneficial for both parties.

The marketing manager explains the fourth important factor to be to show commitment in a sponsorship relationship. The marketing manager states that commitment is one of the reasons to why Samsung is attending at the Swedish Skicross Team’s contests and practices. According to the channel marketing manager, Samsung notice the difference among the skiers when they attend at different contests, the skiers appreciate Samsung’s support and gets more psyched up when Samsung is present and show their commitment. Samsung also brings along their customers to contests and practices in order to create a stronger relationship with their customer and increase awareness of the sport. In order to increase the level of commitment Samsung’s customers have the chance to meet the skiers within the Swedish Skicross Team.

The marketing manager adds all the more Samsung learn about the sport the more commitment they can have and the more the Swedish Skicross Team can tell about the sport the more engaged Samsung will be. The marketing manager says: “I still think the absolutely most important factor is commitment, no matter what kind of cooperation it is. If you don’t have a commitment it won’t work regardless how much money you spend.”

The marketing manager points out that the relationship that Samsung has with the Swedish Skicross Team is the most long-term sponsorship that they have engaged in. Samsung is expecting to work with the Swedish Skicross Team for the next three years and hopefully even longer. Three years is a minimum from Samsung’s perspective. The marketing manager explains that during the first year, the most essential is to get to know each other. The marketing manager says: “I think it is all about the relationship between the people who are working, if you have consensus with each other and want things together it won’t be any problems. Then I think a good relationship will arise no matter what brand it is. If
both can make a commitment to each other, the relationship will be really good…
…As long as personal relationship is working I believe that there will be a balance.”

5.3.3 How Samsung act to ensure these success factors

In order to maintain a fit in the relationship Samsung has with the Swedish Skicross Team the marketing manager mentions two essential aspects. The first one is to have a close cooperation with the Swedish Skicross Team in order for Samsung to create a relationship to their mutual target group. Examples of this are to be seen together at events and conduct the sport within new environments such as having a Skicross contest in a city. The second one is to develop the sport together by finding new ways to watch Skicross and be a part of building Skicross tracks.

Further on the channel marketing manager says that Samsung is working from different perspectives in order to develop the sport. The first perspective is to gather information and knowledge in order to facilitate the Swedish Skicross Team’s work by distributing helpful tools such as products, human resources and technology.

The second is to change how people view Skicross. Here the marketing manager gives the example that Samsung is currently working on a helmet project together with another of the Swedish Skicross Team’s sponsors. Samsung and this sponsor want to offer the opportunity to watch Skicross from the skier’s point of view by having a camera on the helmet of the skier and stream it live. Another example how Samsung develop the sport by increasing the awareness is to do a Skicross edition of a phone. Samsung load the phone with last year’s results from the Skicross World Cup, where they could also have all the Skicross skiers’ logs, twitters and blogs preinstalled and the phone could likewise have another cover. To enhance this PR picture Samsung gives this phone to everyone within the Skicross association in order to promote the phone. Samsung also has the idea of bringing Skicross into a city and have contests within a city environment.
When it comes to what Samsung is doing in order to maintain their mutual goals the marketing manager gave two examples. The first example was that Samsung supply the Swedish Skicross Team with products; human resources and technology that will help the Swedish Skicross Team reach the mutual goal of winning a gold-medal at the Olympic Games 2014. Supplying the Skicross Team with products, human resources and technology is also something that the marketing manager thinks will be a tool for developing the sport. Here the marketing manager gives the example of a helmet project that Samsung has together with another sponsor that will develop the way of watching Skicross. By giving the Swedish Skicross access to Samsung’s products, human resources and technology the marketing manager believes will be a tool useful for reaching their mutual goals. The second example of what Samsung is doing in order to ensure their mutual goals is to communicate Skicross and the Swedish Skicross Team. According to the marketing manager, Samsung as a well known multinational company have a big opportunity to communicate Swedish Skicross, and by doing that helping the Swedish Skicross Team and the sport to expand. The marketing manager mention that Samsung together with the Swedish Skicross Team are building Skicross courses on some ski facilities in Sweden, and this is according to the marketing manager just one example of how Samsung is communicating Swedish Skicross and the Swedish Skicross Team.

In order to raise the commitment in the sponsorship relationship, Samsung attends to practices and contests to get a deeper understanding of the Swedish Skicross Team’s everyday life and how their reality works. If Samsung can have a deeper understanding of the sport they will also help the Swedish Skicross Team in a more efficient way and also increase the level of commitment. Samsung also try to get their customers and salespeople to try Skicross in order to give them understanding and increase the awareness of the sport. The marketing manager believed that by having an open and good relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team, and also by having a close weekly dialogue the level of commitment will have a potential to grow. The figure below shows which success factors Samsung sees in their sponsorship relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team, and also in what way Samsung act in order to ensure these success factors.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Success Factors</th>
<th>Process of Ensuring Success Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Fit</td>
<td>* Close cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Develop the sport together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Develop the Sport</td>
<td>* Supply products, HR and technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Mutual Goals</td>
<td>* Cooperation with other sponsors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Commitment</td>
<td>* Having Skicross events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Supply products, HR and technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Communicate Skicross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Attending World Cup races</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Continuous contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Build interest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.3 Identified success factors, and process of ensuring success factors from Samsung’s perspective in their relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team.

5.4 Case four – Tenson

Tenson is a Swedish clothing company established back in 1951 in Varberg, Sweden and was created by Paul Rydholm. Rydholm was a man who spent most of his time travelling and out in the nature, he therefore needed cloths that worked under these conditions. During Tenson’s first years they had a wide variety of product areas, they produced clothing for soccer players, ice hockey players, cross-country skiers, just to mention a few. Tenson were a sport profile tag in the 50’s, however this changed during the 60’s when Tenson became more of a brand that stood for design and that every garment needs to have an innovating function, this focus has never changed. Today Tenson are designing outdoor, ski and marine clothing and their ambition is to become a world-leading brand in outdoor, ski and marine clothing with a look that is sportier than ever.
Tenson is owned by a corporate group named USG, which are located in the Netherlands. Tenson operates in countries like Germany, Poland, Austria, Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium, Netherlands, and Sweden. Tenson’s largest market is located in Sweden and 2011 they had an annual turnover of 40 million SEK just in Sweden.

The respondent representing Tenson were Oscar Anderberg who works as marketing manager at Tenson, Sweden. Anderberg is located at Tensons head office in Askim, Gothenburg. Anderberg has been working at Tenson during the last three years and his main job assignments are all different aspects of marketing such as performing photo sessions for product catalogues, being involved in sponsoring, sponsoring decisions, negotiations and events.

5.4.1 General reasons for being active within sponsorship relationships
According to Tenson´s marketing manager there are several reasons why Tenson are engaged in sponsoring, however the cornerstone of sponsoring is in some way to strengthen the brand and appear in contexts with people that have the associations that Tenson wants to be connected with. Tenson´s marketing manager further states that one goal is to increase the awareness of Tenson, however it is more essential to have the right associations with a sponsorship relationship, to appear in the right environment that Tenson wants to be associated with, rather than to get as large exposure as possible. Tenson´s marketing manager gave two examples, the first one was, if Tenson just want to have a large exposure they would not sponsor the Swedish Skicross Team, Tenson´s respondent did the comparison with putting up a sign with their logo at Ulleivi where 80-120 000 people visit every week when there are soccer games
and stated that even though the exposure is larger, Ullevi does not possess the right associations that Tenson want to be connected with. The second was that Tenson is sponsoring a triathlon contest on the island Tjörn, located in the Gothenburg’s archipelago. The same aspects could be applied here, if Tenson only wants a large exposure Tenson should sponsor “Göteborgsvarvet” instead, but Tenson does not think it offers the same associations and therefore it does not feels interesting.

5.4.2 Identified success factors within the sponsorship relationship between Tenson and the Swedish Skicross Team

Tenson’s marketing manager mention that Skicross is very right and interesting since they, in Tenson’s mind, have an enormous growth potential just like Tenson. Tenson’s marketing manager believes that it is important to as he expressed it: “walk hand in hand” within a sponsorship relationship. Tenson’s marketing manager add that he believe that Skicross attract an interesting target group, and that people who are watching Skicross is an interesting target group. Another essential factor in the sponsorship relationship according Tenson’s marketing manager is the dialogue between the sponsor and the sponsee. Tenson’s marketing manager argues that in order to reach a successful sponsorship relationship a good dialogue is required. Tenson’s marketing manager further states that the dialogue should include the discussion of what the sponsor and sponsee can do together and how they want to develop the relationship together.

Another factor that Tenson’s marketing manager points out as vital are to be a part of a long-term relationship, the opportunity to grow together and the chance of getting exposure within the right context.

Within the relationship that Tenson has with the Swedish Skicross Team Tenson’s marketing manager mentions several important factors in order for them to succeed. One of them is that Skicross is a small organization and that is seen as an advantage as it gives Tenson the opportunity to have a larger influence. He also comments upon the fact that Swedish Television has started to cover Skicross as a part of their winter sports program, “Vinterstudion”.

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Tenson’s marketing manager says that this gives them larger exposure in the right context with the right associations. Other vital factors according to Tenson’s marketing manager are that the Swedish Skicross Team helps Tenson to create credibility, Skicross furthermore assistances Tenson in product development since they are advanced skiers and ski a lot.

Tenson’s marketing manager states numeral of crucial factors in order for a sponsorship relationship to succeed, such as being present at different contests and events. That Tenson should be active, show that they want to be active, not just offer capital and products. Tenson’s marketing manager explains that Tenson should show participation and activeness towards Skicross. He further says that Tenson should almost be a part of the Swedish Skicross Team and let the Swedish Skicross Team be a part of Tenson’s operation. Tenson’s marketing manager states that the communication with the Swedish Skicross Team is on a weekly basis and that is an important factor when sharing in order to stay updated and maintain the interest.

When Tenson’s marketing manager describes his expectations of the Swedish Skicross Team, aspects like receptiveness and have an open dialogue is mentioned. Tenson’s marketing manager again talks about openness and a will from the Swedish Skicross Team’s side. Openness and will is mentioned throughout the entire interview as essential aspects in a sponsorship relationship. Tenson’s marketing manager also states that his personal believe is that a long-term sponsorship is more beneficial, since in his opinion it takes quite long time before you notice any effect of the sponsorship relationship, it takes time to be associated with the sport. Tenson’s marketing manager states: “I think it is essential to grow into the relationship together, where you can try your way forward, what’s really working and how we should take advantage of each other in the best way.”

According to Tenson’s marketing manager there are more beneficial factors that a sponsorship relationship enables. Tenson’s marketing manager says that new doors have been opened through the Swedish Skicross Team’s network. Those
connections enable Tenson to meet other sponsors that the Swedish Skicross Team has. Tenson’s marketing manager gives some example in what ways new doors have opened. First of all several of the Swedish Skicross Team’s sponsors have a dialogue of conducting some sort of arena project together. Tenson and the other sponsors have had one meeting and in the end of May 2012 they will have another. Tenson’s marketing manager also mentioned that Tenson has began to do some smaller business with one other sponsor, he states that it is no large business yet but Tenson have started to have contact with other sponsors that does not concern the Swedish Skicross Team at all.

5.4.3 How Tenson act to ensure these success factors
Tenson’s marketing manager explains that Tenson has a weekly contact with the Swedish Skicross Team’s general manager and this contact is made either by phone or mail. During these contacts, aspects such as new ideas, the execution of these ideas, various suggestions, and improvements are discussed. According to Tenson’s marketing manager Tenson have been on two trips with the Swedish Skicross Team, this in order to show their commitment and to show themselves for the Swedish Skicross Team.

Tenson’s marketing manager says that Tenson’s entire staff visited a World Cup race in Branäs in order to show the Swedish Skicross Team that Tenson are committed in the relationship. Tenson’s marketing manager further says that this gave Tenson the opportunity to present themselves not only for the Swedish Skicross Team’s general manager but also for the skiers, other staff members of the Swedish Skicross Team and also for the other sponsors. The reason behind inviting all of Tenson’s employees was to increase the level of commitment both from Tenson’s employees and the Swedish Skicross Team. Tenson’s marketing manager says that he believes that both Tenson and the Swedish Skicross Team benefits if they get the chance to meet each other. Tenson’s marketing manager states that in his opinion Tenson can draw benefits if their employees can meet the Swedish Skicross Team and get a deeper understanding of how their everyday looks like and how they are working. He says that he also believes that the Swedish Skicross Team thinks it is fun and appreciates when Tenson visits them.
and show support. Tenson’s marketing manager stresses that Tenson are looking for a solution to use the Swedish Skicross skiers to their own events. He gave Usport as an example; Usport is a larger customer of Tenson and when Usport is about to open two new stores in Sweden Tenson is going to use some of the skiers in the Swedish Skicross Team. The purpose is to have the skiers attending at the opening night to sign autographs and appear in pictures with their fans during this event.

The figure below shows which success factors Tenson sees in their sponsorship relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team, and also in what way Tenson is working in order to ensure these success factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Success Factors</th>
<th>Process of Ensuring Success Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Will</td>
<td>* Being present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Meeting athletes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Dialogue</td>
<td>* Close contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Exposure within the right context</td>
<td>* Openness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Access to the sport</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Sponsor trips</td>
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</table>

Figure 5.4 Identified success factors, and process of ensuring success factors from Tenson’s perspective in their relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team.
6 Analysis

The empirical data that was presented in previous chapter will now be analyzed and compared with the theoretical concepts presented in the literature review chapter. First each case will be analyzed and compared to the theoretical concepts presented in the literature review chapter, further a cross case analysis is made where all cases is compared to each other. Lastly, the analysis chapter will be used as a base for drawing conclusions in the next chapter.

6.1 Case Analysis of the Swedish Skicross Team’s Relationship with Samsung

The empirical data that was collected in previous chapter regarding the Swedish Skicross Team’s relationship with Samsung is here analyzed and compared to the concepts presented in the literature review chapter. First, the relationships identified success factors are analyzed and compared to the concepts presented in the literature review chapter, and lastly how the Swedish Skicross acts in order to ensure these success factors is analyzed and compared with the concepts.

6.1.1 Economically Strong

The first success factor that the Swedish Skicross Team´s general manager mentioned in the Swedish Skicross Team’s relationship with Samsung was that Samsung is an economically strong company. The economically satisfaction that Samsung contributes with to this relationship is something that could be connected to the concept sponsorship relationship satisfaction since Geyskens et al (1999) define sponsorship relationship satisfaction as the positive economic effect that relationships generates.

In order for the Swedish Skicross Team to ensure this success factor the Swedish Skicross Team works towards achieving good athletic results, which is one of their mutual goals. This could be linked to how Wilson (1995) describes how mutual goals holds a relationship together and how mutual goals creates a solid motive for the parties to maintain the relationship. Further Ferrelly et al (2002); Morgan and Hunt (1994) says that mutual goals are seen as a factor that
influences the level of commitment within a relationship. Another factor of how the Swedish Skicross Team ensures strong financial support from Samsung are by working on new ideas that could be beneficial for both parties such as having a Skicross contest in a city environment. This is linked to how Chadwick (2006) describes the level of commitment in a sponsorship relationship to increase if one of the partners perceives that the other partner also is committed.

6.1.2 Personal Contact

The general manager believes that a good personal relationship is a key for having successful relationships; the example of the first meeting with Samsung’s marketing manager was here mentioned. According to the general manager, Samsung’s marketing manager had a very healthy way of looking at things, and Samsung’s marketing manager was also very familiar with what the Swedish Skicross Team was doing. This could be connected to what Wilson et al (1995) says about the concept social bonding. Wilson et al (1995) say that social bonds include factors like acceptance, feelings of likeness, friendship and social interactivity. Further Wilson et al (1995) say that social bonds are included in all successful relationships.

The general manager believed that by showing the other party that you have a genuine interest the level of social bonding will increase, and by steadily bringing up new ideas to discuss each party will show that they are genuinely interested. This could be tied to that social bonding reduces uncertainty, and increases the resource utilization efficiency, which leads to generated value for both parties in a relationship (Sarkar et al 1998). Another aspect that the general manager believes is important in order to achieve a good personal relationship is to have friendly communication. The general manager gave the example of calling Samsung’s representatives just to check how they are doing in order to maintain a good friendly relationship. As social bonding includes factors like friendship and social interactivity, (Wilson et al 1995), the friendly communication could be linked to these two factors.
6.1.3 Communication

The general manager believed that good communication was an essential factor for having a successful relationship with Samsung. By having continuously communication where both parties gets the chance to ask questions and be updated the relationship becomes stronger. This is related to the concept of frequent communication where Lind and Zmud (1991) describe one advantage with having frequent communication to be that it helps to build a common understanding of organizations business functions.

The Swedish Skicross Team has established steady communication and continuous meetings with Samsung, one example of this was the meeting that was held in Branäs in March 2012 during a World Cup race. This could be associated with the concept frequent communication. Blake and Ernst (1993) argue that the most important factor between organizations in order to have successful relationships is frequent communication.

6.1.4 Commitment

The general manager believed that commitment was one of the most significant factors in a successful sponsorship relationship. To ensure a level of high commitment when looking over alternative sponsors, the general manager said that personal relationship was a factor that influenced the selection of sponsor. This is something that Chadwick (2006) explains as relationships is of higher commitment and of more long-term character, especially with organization where there are personal links.

The general manager explained that the Swedish Skicross Team has set up common goals such as increasing the awareness of Skicross together with Samsung. Further the general manager said that common goals are important to have in order to show their commitment to the relationship. This could be associated to what Ferrelly et al (2002) describe as by highlighting mutual goals between the parties in a relationship will effect the commitment within a sponsorship relationship.
The Swedish Skicross Team gave Samsung access to inside information about Skicross and the athletes in order to raise the commitment. Another thing that the Swedish Skicross Team did in order to raise commitment was to invite Samsung to take part at World Cup races at different locations. This could be related to the phenomena that Chadwick (2006) describes as that the level of commitment in a sponsorship relationship is likely to increase if one of the partners perceives that the other partner also is committed.

6.2 Case Analysis of the Swedish Skicross Team´s Relationship with Tenson

The empirical data that was collected in previous chapter regarding the Swedish Skicross Team´s relationship with Tenson is here analyzed and compared to the concepts presented in the literature review chapter. First, the relationships identified success factors are analyzed and compared to the concepts presented in the literature review chapter, and lastly how the Swedish Skicross acts in order to ensure these success factors is analyzed and compared with the concepts.

6.2.1 Sell Products and R&D

The general manager explained that a success factor in their relationship with Tenson was that the Swedish Skicross Team could help Tenson with selling products and R&D. This could be linked to some of the reasons behind sponsoring such as the need of building a strong brand equity, which includes exposure (Keller 2001).

Achieving good athletic results, being good role models, and promoting the products in a good way was examples of how the Swedish Skicross Team worked in order to increase Tenson’s sales figures. When it comes to how the Swedish Skicross Team acts in order to help Tenson with R&D, the Swedish Skicross Team gave Tenson access to athletes where Tenson had the opportunity to ask questions, and by taking advices from the athletes Tenson has a chance to improve their products.
Being good role models and always striving for reaching the best results is something that could be connected to the concept *commitment* where Cobbs (2011) states that *commitment* within sponsorship relationships is often showed by an investment beyond the initial agreement in the contract. Giving access to athletes is something that could be linked with the concept *commitment* in the way that it is likely to increase if one party perceives that the other party also is committed (Chadwick 2006).

### 6.2.2 Potential Growth and Renewing Brand

The fact that both the Swedish Skicross Team and Tenson are relatively young and small organizations is something the general manager saw as something positive since it gave them a chance to grow together. The general manager believed that if Tenson could reach a larger market it would generate advantages such as people getting more aware of the Swedish Skicross Team, this since Tenson where using the Swedish Skicross Team as a communication tool. This is related to how Becker-Olsen and Hill (2006) define relationship *fit* to be a strategic match between sponsors and sponsees with the goal of targeting audience. According to the general manager Tenson was interested of renewing their brand and since the Swedish Skicross Team is a relatively young and exciting organization both parts thinks this could help Tenson renewing their brand. This could be tied to the *relationship fit* in the way that sponsorship relationships lead to that the picture people have of a sponsee will be transferred to the sponsor (Gwinner 2005).

### 6.2.3 Communication

Regarding the communication between the Swedish Skicross Team and Tenson the general manager believed that one factor that improved the communication was that Tenson is a Swedish company located relatively close to where the Swedish Skicross Team is situated. The general manager said that this was a factor that simplified the communication since the Swedish Skicross Team where able to visit Tenson more often. According to the general manager this lead to a more effective communication, and the more effective the *communication*
process is the greater the commitment will be in a relationship (Farrelly et al 2003). The general manager further stressed that it is not enough to send e-mails once a month if you want to have good communication in a relationship; good communication is achieved by having continuously communication on a weekly basis. By having a continuous or frequent communication common definitions of situations develops, and it also builds consensus in a relationship (Van de Ven and Walker 1984).

To ensure good communication with Tenson, the general manager said that the Swedish Skicross Team had established a steady communication together with Tenson where they communicated weekly either by phone or mail. The general manager also said that since Tenson was a Swedish company located relatively close to where the Swedish Skicross team was situated, more spontaneous meetings where held together with Tenson. One of the advantages with establishing frequent communication is that it helps in order to build a common understanding between the organizations (Lind and Zmud 1991).

6.2.4 Commitment

The general manager said that it was important for both the Swedish Skicross Team and Tenson that both parties has a positive attitude and shows a genuine interest in the relationship. The general manager further stated: “Except the obvious that our sponsors helps us financing our work, the expectations is that the sponsors are as active and engaged as possible.” If both parts in the relationship share a genuine interest and if both parties communicate this efficiently it may increase the level of communication in the relationship (Farrelly et al 2002).

By giving Tenson access to the Swedish Skicross Team´s athletes and by giving Tenson access to what the Swedish Skicross Team where doing increased the level of commitment in the relationship according to the general manager. This could be connected to how Chadwick (2006) explains that the level of commitment in a sponsorship relationship has a tendency to increase if one of the partners in the relationship perceives that the other partner also in
committed. The general manager also described that the Swedish Skicross Team where inviting Tenson to World Cup races in order to raise both Tenson’s and the Swedish Skicross Team’s commitment in the relationship. By increasing both parties commitment in a relationship can be significant in order to continue having a successful relationship over a longer time period since commitment is seen as a cornerstone in long-term relationships (Chadwick 2006; Farrelly and Quester 2005b; Morgan and Hunt 1994).

6.3 Case Analysis of Samsung’s Relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team

The empirical data that was collected in previous chapter regarding Samsung’s relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team is here analyzed and compared to the concepts presented in the literature review chapter. First, the relationships identified success factors are analyzed and compared to the concepts presented in the literature review chapter, and lastly how Samsung acts in order to ensure these success factors is analyzed and compared with the concepts.

6.3.1 Fit

According to Samsung’s marketing manager the Swedish Skicross Team is a useful tool for Samsung in order to tie values and associations that Samsung want to be linked with. The marketing manager: “We need to build our brand and build these certain values that we want to be connected with.” This is related to the concept brand image where it is argued that sponsorship relationship gives the sponsor and sponsee the benefits of image transfer, where the associations’ people have of one party is transferred over to the other party due to the associations created from the relationships (Gwinner 1997; Meenaghan 1991). Samsung’s marketing manager stated that the Swedish Skicross Team matches Samsung’s personality of being youthful, cocky, and forward. This could be connected to brand image and how Gwinner and Eaton (1999) explain that sponsors can leverage their sponsorship investments in terms of image transfer, by choosing sponsees based on image similarities.
In order to ensure this fit Samsung and the Swedish Skicross Team needed to create a relationship to their mutual target group. They are doing this by being seen together at events, conduct Skicross in new environments such as having a Skicross contest in a city. Samsung is working on finding new ways to watch Skicross and they are being a part of building Skicross tracks. This is associated with *relationship fit* and the created fit that is described by Becker-Olsen and Simmons (2002), who defines created fit as where communication activities are used in order to create fitting relationship.

### 6.3.2 Develop the Sport

Samsung’s marketing manager stated that Samsung help the sport to grow in the sense of increase the awareness and create a larger recruitment base for the Swedish Skicross Team. By doing this Samsung gets a larger marketing window within the right forum. According to Quester and Farrelly (1998) it may take time to link a corporate image or a brand with a sponsee, however this impression can be long-lasting once a meaningful association is established (Ibid).

Samsung’s channel marketing manager stressed that Samsung are gathering information and knowledge in order to facilitate the Swedish Skicross Team’s work and every-day by distributing helpful tools such as products, human resources and technology. This is related to *commitment* in the sense that one of indicate commitment could be to dedicate vital resource such as human resources and products in order to manage and develop the relationship (Chadwick 2006). Samsung want to change how people look at Skicross. Samsung’s marketing manager said that Samsung is currently working on a helmet project together with another of the Swedish Skicross Team’s sponsors. They want to offer the opportunity to watch Skicross from the skier’s point of view by having a camera on the helmet of the skier. This could be associated with *commitment* as one dimension of commitment is to make investments or distributing resources above the initial rights fee or contract (Cobbs 2011; Farrelly and Quester 2005b).
Samsung are currently working on the idea of bringing Skicross into a city and have contests within a city environment. This is linked with the concept *relationship fit* since created fit is explained when communication activities are used in order to create a fitting relationship according to Becker-Olsen and Simmons (2002).

### 6.3.3 Mutual Goals

Both Samsung’s marketing manager and Samsung’s channel marketing manager states that mutual goals are of extreme importance. The marketing manager explained that Samsung’s mutual goals with the Swedish Skicross Teams is to develop the sport, create larger awareness, expand the sport and win an Olympic gold medal in Sochi, Russia 2014. This is tied to the concept *mutual goals*, which were defined by Wilson: (1995:9) *“as the degree to which partners share goals that only can be accomplished through joint action and the maintenance of the relationship.”* Wilson (1995) further explains that mutual goals create a solid motive for the parties to maintain the relationship.

In order to reach Samsung’s and the Swedish Skicross Team’s mutual goals Samsung’s marketing manager gave several examples. The first example given was that Samsung distribute products, human resources and technology in order to facilitate the Swedish Skicross Team’s every-day and the possibility to win an Olympic gold medal in Sochi, Russia 2014. This could be connected to the concept *commitment* since this concept is a cornerstone in long-term relationships (Chadwick 2006; Farrelly and Quester 2005b; Morgan and Hunt 1994). The second example is that Samsung are using their brand, which is a well-known brand of a multinational company, when communicating Samsung. Samsung is building Skicross tracks on different ski facilities in Sweden and this is just one way of communicating the Swedish Skicross Team according to Samsung’s marketing manager. This is associated with *commitment* and how Farrelly and Quester (2005b) explain *commitment* as an orientation regulated by certain intentions and behaviors which is deliberately activated to realize value for both the sponsor and the sponsee over long-term.
6.3.4 Commitment

Samsung’s marketing manager stated that commitment is one of the reasons why Samsung is attending to at the Swedish Skicross Team’s contests and practices. Samsung’s channel marketing manager explained that Samsung can notice the difference among the skiers when Samsung attends at various contests. According to the channel marketing manager the skiers appreciate this and gets more psyched up when Samsung is present. Samsung’s Swedish marketing manager said: “I still think the absolutely most important factor is commitment, no matter what kind of cooperation. If you don’t have a commitment it won’t work regardless how much money you spend.” This is related to commitment since Chadwick (2006) stressed that the level of commitment in a sponsorship relationship is likely to increase if one of the parties perceives that the other part also is committed.

The Swedish marketing manager explained that all the more Samsung can learn about the sport, the more commitment can they have and the more the Swedish Skicross Team can tell about the sport, the more engaged Samsung will be. This could be connected to commitment in the way that by highlighting shared interests and by communicating this efficiently between the parties the level of commitment in a sponsorship relationship will grow (Farrelly et al 2002).

Samsung’s marketing manager pointed out that the relationship Samsung has with the Swedish Skicross Team is the most long-term sponsorship they have engaged in. Samsung is expecting to work with the Swedish Skicross Team for the next three years and hopefully longer. This is tied together with the concept commitment, since commitment is a crucial factor when managing long-term relationships (Chadwick 2006; Farrelly and Quester 2005b; Morgan and Hunter 1994). The marketing manager for Samsung said: I think it is all about the relationship between the people who are working, if you have consensus with each other and want things to happen together it won’t be any problems. Then I think a good relationship will arise no matter what brand it is. If both can make a commitment to each other, the relationship will be really good… …As long as personal relationship is working I believe that there will be a balance.”
This statement is linked with *social bonding* in two ways and *shared values*. The first way is that according to Wilson (1995) social bonds includes factors such as acceptance, feelings of likeness, friendship and social interactivity. Social bonds are included in all successful relationships (Ibid). The second way is that according to Gounaris and Venetis (2002) *social bonding* has a positive influence on relationships between organizations. As Morgan and Hunt (1994:25) defined *shared values*: “the extent to which partners have beliefs in common about what behaviors, goal, and policies are important or unimportant, appropriate or inappropriate, and right or wrong”, connection could be made to *shared values* as well.

To increase their interest, knowledge and understanding Samsung attends at various contests and practices. Samsung also tries to get their customers and salespeople to try Skicross in order to spread the interest and awareness of the sport. This is tied together with *mutual goals* in the way that shared goals is accomplished through joint action and are not possible to reach solely (Wilson 1995). Samsung aims towards having a good and open communication with the Swedish Skicross Team, the communication is on a close and weekly basis. This is related to the concept *frequent communication* since Bleeke and Ernst (1993) argue that the most important factor in successful relationship is communication. Ven de Ven and Walker (1984) states that through *frequent communication* consensus is built.
6.4 Case Analysis of Tenson’s Relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team

The empirical data that was collected in previous chapter regarding Tenson’s relationship the Swedish Skicross Team is here analyzed and compared to the concepts presented in the literature review chapter. First, the relationships identified success factors are analyzed and compared to the concepts presented in the literature review chapter, and lastly how Tenson acts in order to ensure these success factors is analyzed and compared with the concepts.

6.4.1 Will

Tenson’s marketing manager believed that having a will is an important factor in Tenson’s relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team. Openness and will is something Tenson’s marketing manager mentioned several times during the interview, and was highlighted as an essential aspect in a successful sponsorship relationship. When reviewing past literature connections can be made between what the respondent of Tenson believed and what past researchers have stated. In order to build strong relationships Chadwick (2006) states that one dimension of commitment could be signaled through the willingness of dedicating to the relationship.

The level of commitment in a sponsorship relationship has a tendency to rise if one partner believes that the other partner is committed (Chadwick 2006). Tenson’s marketing manager believed that by showing the Swedish Skicross Team that Tenson is committed in the relationship, and that they have a will to make the relationship as good as possible the relationship would be good. Tenson’s marketing manager also gave the example of that Tenson’s entire staff visited a World Cup race in Branäs just to show the Swedish Skicross Team that Tenson are committed in the relationship.

6.4.2 Dialogue

Having a good dialogue is something that Tenson’s marketing manager thinks is a factor of major importance in order to have a successful relationship. A good dialogue includes a discussion of what both Tenson and the Swedish Skicross
Team can do together, and how both parties want to develop the sport together according to Tenson’s marketing manager. Mohr and Nevin (1990) say that frequent communication leads to better relationships, and in order to stay updated and maintain an interest in a relationship Tenson’s marketing manager emphasized the importance of communicating on a weekly basis, and the respondent further said that Tenson expected an open dialogue with the Swedish Skicross Team. Having a good dialogue is a part of successful communication between organizations in sponsorship relationships, and according to Cummings (1984) communication between organizations in relationships is the essence of coordinating behavior that leads to relationship development.

Tenson’s marketing manager said that aspects such as new ideas, the execution of these ideas, various suggestions and possible improvement was discussed with the Swedish Skicross Team on a weekly basis in order to ensure good communication within their relationship. Through frequent communication common definitions develops, and this is something that builds consensus in a relationship (Van de Ven and Walker 1984).

6.4.3 Exposure within the right context

The Swedish Skicross Team is a relatively young and small organization, and this is something that Tenson’s marketing manager saw as something positive for the relationship since it gave Tenson an opportunity to have a larger influence on the relationship. Tenson’s marketing manager also pointed out the importance of getting exposure time within the right context since it created credibility for Tenson. The Swedish Television (SVT) has started to cover Skicross as a part of their sports program “Vinterstudion” and this was something that Tenson’s marketing manager saw as a possibility for Tenson to be exposure in the right context with the right associations. In order to get exposure within the right context it is important that the organizations fits well together, and according to Basil and Herr (2006) organizations that fit well together are considered as stronger and more favorable than relationships between organizations that do not fit well together. Since Tenson and the Swedish Skicross Team are connected
to each other by their sponsorship relationship the picture people have of the Swedish Skicross Team will be transferred to Tenson (Gwinner 2005).

In order for Tenson to get exposure within the right context Tenson’s marketing manager said that it was important to show that Tenson where committed. Bringing Tenson’s entire staff to the World Cup race in Branäs was one way for Tenson to show their commitment. Tenson’s marketing manager believed that the sponsorship relationship between Tenson and the Swedish Skicross Team could draw benefits from these meetings since they got a chance to meet each other. An imbalance of commitment in a sponsorship relationship could lead to a decreased level of quality in the relationship, (Farrelly 2010), which in the relationship between Tenson and the Swedish Skicross Team could mean a decreased chance of exposure within the right context. Tenson’s marketing manager said that Tenson where looking for a solution to use the Swedish Skicross Team’s athletes on Tenson’s own events in order to get the chance to increase their exposure time. Tenson’s marketing manager gave the example where Tenson where going to use some of the athletes on new stores opening nights. The purpose where to have the athletes present, signing autographs and appear in pictures with fans. This was something that Tenson’s marketing manager believed would increase Tenson’s exposure time within the right context. By increasing the exposure time within the right context the associations people have over the Swedish Skicross Team can be transferred over to Tenson due to the associations that has been created from the sponsorship relationship (Gwinner 1997; Meenaghan 1991). This is something that can leverage Tenson’s sponsorship investments (Gwinner and Eaton 1999).
6.5 Cross Case Analysis

In this section, the gathered data from the different cases is analyzed against each other. First, a figure is presented in order to visualize the identified success factors for each case, how the organizations act to ensure these success factors and what connections that have been made with the concepts presented in the literature review chapter. Further the cross case analysis is structured according to the research questions that was presented in chapter one. The sponsees view on success factors and how the sponsee act in order to ensure these success factors is first presented and then the sponsors views are presented.

6.5.1 Illustration of the different cases

In table 6.1 below the identified success factors, how the organizations act to ensure these success factors and what connections that have been made with the concepts presented in the literature review chapter is illustrated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>The Swedish Skicross Team’s relationship with Samsung</th>
<th>The Swedish Skicross Team’s relationship with Tenson</th>
<th>Samsung’s relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team</th>
<th>Tenson’s relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identified Success Factors</td>
<td>• Economically Strong</td>
<td>• Sell Products and R&amp;D</td>
<td>• Fit</td>
<td>• Will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Personal Contact</td>
<td>• Potential Growth and Renewing the Brand</td>
<td>• Develop the Sport</td>
<td>• Close Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Communication</td>
<td>• Communication</td>
<td>• Mutual Goals</td>
<td>• Having Skicross Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Commitment</td>
<td>• Commitment</td>
<td>• Commitment</td>
<td>• Communicate Skicross</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Examples of how each organization acts in order to ensure the success factors | • Achieve good Sporting Results | • Role Models | • Close Cooperation | • Commitment |
| | • Show Engagement | • Work Closely Together | • Having Skicross Events | | |
| | • Steady Weekly Communication | • Steady Weekly Communication | • Communicate Skicross | • Commitment |
| | • Common Goals | • Access to the Sport | • Continuous Contact | | |

| Connections with Concepts | • Commitment | • Commitment | • Commitment | • Commitment |
| | • Mutual Goals | • Fit | • Mutual Goals | | |
| | • Communication | • Communication | • Fit | | |
| | • Frequent Communication | • Frequent Communication | • Brand Associations | | |
| | • Social Bonding | | • Brand Image | | |
| | | | • Communication | | |
| | | | • Frequent Communication | | |
| | | | • Fit | | |
| | | | • Brand Associations | | |

Table 6.1 Illustration of the different cases
6.5.2 Identified success factors from the sponsee’s (the Swedish Skicross Team) perspective

Concerning the success factors identified by the sponsee regarding the Swedish Skicross Team’s sponsorship relationships with the two sponsors, Samsung and Tenson the foremost mentioned success factors were to have a strong commitment and good communication. Both commitment and communication was factors that were mentioned by the Swedish Skicross Team’s general manager regarding their relationship with Samsung and Tenson. Commitment was according to the Swedish Skicross Team’s general manager a key factor in order to have a successful relationship. Communication was also mentioned as a key factor, and concerning the communication it was important to have a frequent communication where both parties got the chance to share information on a regular basis.

The general manager also mentioned social bonding or personal relationship to be an important factor in the relationships the Swedish Skicross Team has with their sponsors. The social bonding was also described to be connected with the communication in the way that the established personal relationship between the Swedish Skicross Team’s general manager and representatives from both Samsung and Tenson was described to be good for the relationships.

In the relationship the Swedish Skicross Team has with Samsung the Swedish Skicross Team’s general manager mentioned the financial support as a success factor for the relationship. Since Samsung is an economically strong company with high financial power the general manager saw this as a success factor. This can be compared with the factor of selling products and R&D that the general manager mentioned as a success factor in the Swedish Skicross Team’s relationship with Tenson. Since Tenson is a smaller company compared to Samsung they don’t have the same economically assets, but Tenson was described as a company that had the possibilities to supply the Swedish Skicross Team with industry related products which was described as a success factor by the general manager. Since the products that Tenson offers are closely related to
the Skicross business. The Swedish Skicross Team had the possibility to help Tenson with R&D and increasing Tenson’s sales figures.

6.5.3 How the sponsee (the Swedish Skicross Team) act in order to ensure the success factors

The Swedish Skicross Team’s general manager described how the Swedish Skicross Team acts in order to ensure the success factor for both their relationships with Samsung and Tenson in almost identical ways. First of all, the Swedish Skicross Team had to achieve athletic results in order to be an interesting organization for their sponsors. Concerning the commitment, which was described by the general manager as one of the key factors for successful relationships, the Swedish Skicross Team works closely together with both Samsung and Tenson in order to show that they are engaged in what they are doing. In order to raise the commitment from all parts in the relationships, sponsor trips was arranged where the sponsors go the chance to meet the athletes and vice versa.

Communication was also described by the general manager as a key factor for having successful relationships, and therefore the Swedish Skicross Team had established a steady weekly communication with their sponsors where both parties got the chance to share information with each other. A personal relationship was also established with both Samsung’s and Tenson’s respondents, which according to the Swedish Skicross Team’s general manager was beneficial for maintaining a good communication. Another factor that had a positive impact on the relationships was to have common goals together with the sponsors. This concerned both the relationship the Swedish Skicross Team had with Samsung and Tenson, however it was mostly mentioned in the interview with Samsung. The reason for why it was mainly mentioned as a factor in the Swedish Skicross Team’s relationship with Samsung could be since Samsung was the main sponsor for the Swedish Skicross Team and therefore most influential.
6.5.4 The identified success factors from the sponsors (Samsung and Tenson) perspective

A fit in the relationship was something that both Samsung and Tenson described to be important in their relationships with the Swedish Skicross Team. Samsung’s marketing manager stated that Skicross matches Samsung’s personality of being youthful, cocky, and forward, while Tenson’s marketing manager said that the fact that both Tenson and the Swedish Skicross Team was young and relatively small organizations was a beneficial factor in the relationship. Further Tenson’s marketing manager described this to be beneficial for Tenson since the Swedish Skicross Team could exposure Tenson within the right context. Both Samsung and Tenson mentioned commitment as a factor with high importance in their relationships with the Swedish Skicross Team. The importance of commitment in a relationship was described clearly by Samsung’s marketing manager as he stated: “I still think the absolutely most important factor is commitment, no matter what kind of cooperation. If you don’t have a commitment it won’t work regardless how much money you spend.” Tenson’s marketing manager also said that commitment is a key factor in order to have a successful relationship and highlighted openness and will as essential aspects in their relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team.

Communication was another factor that both Samsung and Tenson considered to be a significant factor in their relationships with the Swedish Skicross Team. Samsung’s marketing manager said that Samsung aimed towards having a good and open communication with the Swedish Skicross Team on a weekly basis. Tenson’s marketing manager said that a good dialogue was a factor of major importance in order to have a successful relationship. Tenson’s marketing manager as well as Samsung’s representatives emphasized the importance of communicating on a weekly basis where an open dialogue was established.
6.5.5 How the sponsors (Samsung and Tenson) acts in order to ensure the success factors

Both Samsung and Tenson was working closely together with the Swedish Skicross Team, and Samsung’s marketing manager explained that by working closely together the commitment in the relationship increases from both parties. Tenson’s marketing manager gave the example of bringing Tenson’s entire staff to a World Cup race in Brânä as a way of working close together with the Swedish Skicross Team.

Samsung and Tenson’s representatives also mentioned that a fit between the sponsor and the sponsee was an important factor for having successful relationships. In order to ensure a fit in the relationship Samsung’s marketing manager said that Samsung and the Swedish Skicross Team needs to create a relationship to their mutual target group. By being seen together at events, conduct the Skicross in new environments such as having a Skicross contest in a city is examples of how Samsung acts to ensure this. Tenson’s marketing manager gave the example where Tenson where going to use some of the athletes on new stores opening nights, since this would increase the fit between Tenson and the Swedish Skicross Team.

In order to ensure a good communication both Samsung and Tenson mentioned the importance of having a steady weekly communication. Tenson’s marketing manager said that aspects such as new ideas, the execution of these ideas, various suggestions and possible improvement was subjects discussed weekly with the Swedish Skicross Team.

6.5.6 Comparison between the sponsee and the sponsors views on sponsorship relationships

By first analyzing the sponsees view and later analyzing the sponsors view, comparisons between the sponsee and its sponsors is now enabled. First of all, most of the success factors mentioned are common for both the sponsee and the sponsors. Both the sponsee and the sponsors seem communication and
commitment as key success factors in their sponsorship relationships. Successful communication is described both by the sponsee and the sponsors to be when the communication is frequent on a weekly basis and where a good personal relationship has a positive impact on the communication.

Both the sponsors and the sponsee believed that commitment where a major factor for having a successful sponsorship relationship. The view of how strong commitment was achieved where common for the sponsors and the sponsee. Examples of how strong commitment was ensured in the relationships were by showing a genuine interest, going on sponsor trips and by bringing up new ideas to discuss. The sponsee also mentioned the success factor of having a sponsorship relationship with a economically strong sponsor and/or by having a sponsorship relationship with a sponsor that was able to support the sponsee with industry related funds such as products. Since the sponsor is the actor that provides the economically and product support this success factor was only mentioned by the sponsee.

Having a fit in a relationship was also mentioned as a success factor in a sponsorship relationship. This was mentioned both by the sponsee and the sponsors, however the fit was more discussed by the sponsors and seemed to be more significant for the sponsors compared to the sponsee.
Conclusions

In this chapter the research questions presented in chapter one will be answered and thereby the research purpose that is to investigate the relationship between a sponsee and its sponsors to identify success factors and how the parties act in order to ensure these success factors is fulfilled. Each of the research questions presented in chapter one is answered under separate headings, with the view from both the sponsee and the sponsors perspective. Finally, a presentation of theoretical implications, managerial implications, limitations and suggestions for future research is presented.

7.1 What are the success factors for a sponsee in a sponsorship relationship?

This research shows that the most essential success factors for a sponsee in a sponsorship relationship is communication and commitment. Communication should be frequent on a weekly basis in order to be successful and a personal relationship or a social bond with the sponsors was showed to increase the level of communication in a sponsorship relationship. Commitment was also showed to be an essential success factor for a sponsee in a sponsorship relationship and the commitment in a sponsorship relationship was showed to increase by having mutual goals together with the sponsors.

Other successful factors for a sponsee in a sponsorship relationship was to have sponsorship relationships with economically strong sponsors and/or to have a relationship with business related sponsors that could supply the sponsee with business related funds such as products.

7.2 How do a sponsee act in order to ensure these success factors?

This research shows various ways of how a sponsee acts in order to ensure these above mentioned success factors. To ensure a good communication in a sponsorship relationship a sponsee established a friendly communication together with the sponsors on a weekly basis. A personal relationship with the sponsor’s representatives has also been established since a good personal
relationship or social bond is showed in this research to be an important factor for having successful communication.

To ensure strong commitment in sponsorship relationships the sponsee acts in various ways. One way is to show a genuine interest in the relationship and bring new ideas up for discussion. This research also shows that by giving the sponsors access to the sponsee organization the commitment increases from both parties in the relationship. Arranging sponsor trips together with the sponsors was also showed in this research to be a successful action in order to reach a successful relationship. Lastly, in order to ensure the economically and product support the sponsee puts a lot of effort in being good role models and achieving good athletic results.

**7.3 What are the success factors for a sponsor in a sponsorship relationship?**

This research shows that the most significant success factors for a sponsor in a sponsorship relationship is to have strong commitment, good communication and a good fit with the sponsee organization. A close cooperation between the sponsors and the sponsee was showed to increase the level of commitment in a sponsorship relationship and the chance to be a part of the development of a sport was also seen by the sponsors as a success factor in the sponsorship relationship.

The communication with the sponsee should be frequent on a weekly basis so that both parties can share information with each other. A personal relationship with the sponsees representative was also showed to be a factor increasing the quality of the communication. To have a good fit with the sponsee was also seen to be a success factor of major importance for the sponsors. The sponsee is a useful tool for the sponsor to communicate their brand, and a great fit between the sponsors and the sponsee ties values and associations that the sponsor wants to be connected with.
7.4 How do sponsors acts in order to ensure these success factors?

It is shown in this research that sponsors acts in various ways in order to ensure the above mentioned success factors in a sponsorship relationship. To ensure a strong commitment in a sponsorship relationship the sponsors where attending at different contests and practices together with the sponsee. The sponsors where also bringing their staff to the sponsees competitions in order to increase the level of commitment from both parties of the relationship. Another way of how the sponsors ensured strong commitment in a sponsorship relationship was by showing the sponsee a great will and genuine interest.

To ensure good communication in a sponsorship relationship the sponsors had established a strong weekly communication together with the sponsee. It was also showed that a personal relationship was beneficial for having a successful communication with the sponsee. This research also shows how the sponsors act in order to ensure a great fit between the sponsors and the sponsee. By being seen together with the sponsee at different events and by conducting new events in new environments the sponsor together with the sponsee created a mutual relationship to their common target group. Another way of how the sponsors ensured a great fit with the sponsee was by using the sponsee organizations athletes at the sponsors own events where the athletes where present, signing autographs and appeared in pictures with fans in order to increase the connections between the sponsee and the sponsors.

7.5 Overall Conclusions

It is shown in this research that communication, commitment and to have relationships with economically strong and/or with business related sponsors are major success factors for a sponsee in a sponsorship relationship. Examples of how a sponsee acts in order to ensure these success factors are that the sponsee have established a weekly communication, show a genuine interest, brings new ideas to discussion, arranging sponsor trips and giving the sponsors access to the sponsee organization.
The major identified success factors when looking at the sponsors perspective is communication, commitment and to have a good fit with the sponsee organization. Examples of how the sponsors acts in order to ensure these success factors are to attend events, show a genuine interest, establish a personal relationship and weekly communication as well as using the sponsee organizations athletes at their own events. In the figure 7.1 below these above success factors and ways of acting is visualized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Success Factors by the Sponsee</th>
<th>Identified Success Factors by the Sponsors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Communication</td>
<td>• Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commitment</td>
<td>• Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Economically strong and/or business related sponsors</td>
<td>• Fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How the Sponsee acts in order to ensure these Success Factors</td>
<td>How the Sponsors acts in order to ensure these Success Factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Weekly Communication</td>
<td>• Attending Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Genuine Interest</td>
<td>• Genuine Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bringing Ideas</td>
<td>• Personal Relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Arranging Sponsor Trips</td>
<td>• Weekly Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Giving Access</td>
<td>• Using Sponsees Athletes at own Events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7.1 Conclusion Summary
7.6 Theoretical Implications

The purpose of this research was to penetrate deeper in order to reach a larger understanding of a sponsorship relationship. By answering the research questions connected to success factors within a sponsorship relationship fulfilled the purpose with this research. This was conducted by adopting theories from past investigations, therefore it could be claimed that this research has made contribution to these theories by testing them from a new point of view.

Some of the theories mentioned in the literature review were confirmed to link very well with the empirical data. E.g. Morgan and Hunt’s (1994) stated that commitment is seen as a central factor in all relation exchange between organizations as well as Chadwick (2006) and Farrelly and Quester (2005b) proposals that commitment is recognized as a cornerstone in long-term relationships. Thus it could be seen that these theories has been proved and in some range tested in a new context. Further contributions that could be made are connected with the claim made by Anderson and Narus (1990) and Ahmed et al (1999) as well as other researchers, that effective communication is a success factor in relationships and lead to commitment being developed between the organizations within the relationship. These theoretical claims correlate to a large extent with the empirical findings.

According to the relationship fit, suggested by Basil and Herr (2006), that those organizations that fit well together are considered to be stronger and more favorable than relationships between organizations does not fit well together. It could be assumed that this fit is of higher importance from the sponsors’ perspective rather than the sponsee’s perception. Based on this, the recommendation is to reconsider the use of this theory before conducting a research from the perspective of both the sponsee and sponsors side or only from the perspective of the sponsee.
7.7 Managerial Implications

This research indicates that both sponsees and sponsors have common views of what factors that are of high importance in order to have a successful sponsorship relationship. Factors like having a strong commitment and having a steady communication on a weekly basis are factors that both the sponsors and sponsee considered as key factors in a successful sponsorship relationship. Therefore a recommendation to managers that are active within sponsorship relationships is to carefully consider these factors when getting involved in sponsorship relationships. Both the sponsor and the sponsee should show strong commitment in the relationship and a recommendation to managers would therefore be to set common goals together since that is showed in this research to be a factor that increases the level of commitment in a relationship. Furthermore, this research indicates the importance of having a good fit in a sponsorship relationship, and therefore a recommendation mainly pointed to sponsors but also to sponsee organizations is to make sure that the other partner in the sponsorship relationship fits well with the organizations values and norms. Even though this research has it focus on sponsorship relationships it can be assumed that these suggestions would be of use for other organizations that are active within inter-organizational relationships as well. Managers at organizations that are operating within inter-organizational relationships should focus on having a frequent communication and a high level of commitment.

7.8 Limitations

This research has been limited to view the sponsorship relationships between one sponsee organization and two of its sponsors. The main reason behind this limitation is due to limitations in time and finances. It would be too costly and take to much time to investigate a higher amount of relationships. With more time and financial recourses at hand, a larger amount of organizations could have been investigated which might have affected the result of the research. The organizations included in this research were chosen by a convenience sample since one of the researchers of this study had a personal contact with one of the organizations. Using a convenience sample is an accepted method, but in some cases it can be misleading. The interview questions asked during the interviews
were open-ended questions based on three main theoretical concepts and its operationalized variables. By using other theoretical concepts as base for the interview questions could have lead to different empirical findings, and therefore also another research result.

7.9 Suggestions for Future Research

For those who want to do future research in the area of sponsorship relationships a couple of interesting suggestions are further presented. As all the sponsorship relationships studied in this research are relatively young relationships a suggestion for further research would be to look at more established relationship between organizations that have been active in their relationships for a longer period of time. Furthermore, the investigated sponsorship relationships in this research were based on the relationship between one sponsee organization and two of its sponsors. A suggestion could therefore be to increase the amount of sponsee organizations so that comparisons could be done of how the sponsors perceive their relationships with different sponsees. The sponsee organization included in this research was a relatively young and small Swedish organization; therefore a suggestion could be to do a research on a larger more established non-Swedish organization. Furthermore the investigated sponsee organization was only active within the sport Skicross, therefore a suggestion could be to investigate organizations operating within other sports.

Lastly, since this study only has been investigating one sponsee organization and two of its sponsors no generalized conclusions could be drawn. However, this research finding could be used as a base for constructing hypothesis, which later could be used in a quantitative approach in order to draw more generalizable conclusions.
Reference list:


Websites:

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Appendix 1 Interview Guide for the Sponsors (English and Swedish versions)

General Information:

- Name of the company:
- Name and position of the respondents:
- Year of company foundation:
- Business mission:

1. What are the main reasons behind why you are sponsoring in general?
   - How are these reasons key drivers for you?

2. What factors do you consider vital in order to create value in a sponsorship relationship?
   - In what way are these factors so important when creating value?
   - What do you do in order to ensure that these factors create the expected value?

3. What traits does the Swedish Skicross Team possess that makes them attractive to sponsor?
   - In what way does these traits generate value to your relation?

4. Do you see any similarities between your company and the Swedish Skicross Team?
   - If yes could you describe these similarities?

5. What are your objectives with the sponsorship relationship you have with the Swedish Skicross Team?
   - Do you have any mutual goals together with the Swedish Skicross Team?

6. What does the Swedish Skicross Team expect from you in this sponsorship relationship?
7. What do you do in order to fulfill the expectations the Swedish Skicross Teams have on you?

8. What is expected from the Swedish Skicross Team out of your perspective in order to create value for your sponsorship relationship?

9. In what way do you make sure that what you expect from the Swedish Skicross Team is fulfilled?

10. What are your opinion concerning time span of your relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team?
    - What are your reasons behind the chosen time frame?
    - Which advantages/disadvantages do you see in a long-term/short-term relationship?

11. Could you elaborate how you communicate with the Swedish Skicross Team?
    - What are important aspects in order to achieve a good communication?

12. Are there any areas in your relationship with the Swedish Skicross Team where you can see some room for improvements?
    - If yes, please exemplify
Appendix 1 Intervjuguide för sponsorerna

Generell Information:

- **Namn på företaget:**
- **Namn och position på de intervjuade:**
- **Ansvarsområden:**
- **Startår för företaget:**
- **Affärsidé:**

1. Vilka är generellt sätt era huvudanledningar till varför ni ingår sponsringsavtal?
   - På vilket sätt är dessa de viktigaste faktorerna för er?

2. Vilka faktorer anser ni vara de viktigaste för att skapa värde i en sponsringsrelation?
   - På vilket sätt är dessa så viktiga?
   - Vad gör ni för att försäkra er om att dessa faktorer skapar det förväntade värdet i sponsringsrelationen?

3. Skulle ni kunna nämna vad det är som gör att det svenska skicrosslandslaget är intressant för er att samarbeta med? (Vad är det för speciella egenskaper de besitter?)
   - På vilket sätt skapar dessa egenskaper värde för er sponsringsrelation?

4. Ser ni några likheter mellan ert företag och det svenska skicrosslandslaget?
   - Om ja, skulle ni kunna beskriva dessa likheter?

5. Vad har ni för mål med er sponsringsrelation med det svenska skicrosslandslaget?
   - Har ni några gemensamma mål tillsammans med svenska Skicrosslandslaget?

6. Vad tror ni att det svenska skicrosslandslaget har för förväntningar på er?
7. På vilket sätt arbetar ni för att leva upp till de förväntningar svenska skicrosslandslaget har på er?

8. Om vi nu vänder på det, vad har ni för förväntningar på skicrosslandslaget? (Vad är det ni förväntar er ska skapa värde till relationen?)

9. På vilket sätt försäkrar ni er att det svenska skicrosslandslaget lever upp till dessa förväntningar?

10. Hur ser ert samarbete med det svenska skicrosslandslaget ut vad gäller tidsperiod?
    - Vad är anledningen till att ni bestämt er för att satsa på denna tidsperiod?
    - Vad anser ni vara fördelar/nackdelar med att satsa på en längre respektive kortare period?

11. Skulle ni kunna beskriva på vilket sätt ni kommunicerar med det svenska skicrosslandslaget?
    - Vilka faktorer är viktiga för er vad gäller att uppnå en god kommunikation?

12. I relationen mellan er och svenska skicrosslandslaget, finns det något område där ni ser att det finns möjlighet till förbättringar?
    - Om ja, ge exempel
Appendix 2 Interview Guide for the Swedish Skicross Team (English and Swedish versions)

General Information:

- Name of the organization:
- Name and position of the respondents:
- Year of company foundation:
- Business mission:

1. What are the main reasons behind why you are active in sponsorship relationships in general?
   - How are these reasons key drivers for you?

2. What factors do you consider vital in order to create value in a sponsorship relationship?
   - In what way are these factors so important when creating value?
   - What do you do in order to ensure that these factors create the expected value?

3. What traits does Samsung/Tenson possess that makes them an attractive sponsor?
   - In what way does these traits generate value to your relation?

4. Do you see any similarities between your company and the Swedish Skicross Team?
   - If yes could you describe these similarities?

5. What are your objectives with the sponsorship relationship you have with Samsung/Tenson?
   - Do you have any mutual goals together with Samsung/Tenson?

6. What does Samsung/Tenson expect from you in this sponsorship relationship?
7. What is expected from Samsung/Tenson out of your perspective in order to create value for your sponsorship relationship?
   - In what way do you make sure that what you expect from Samsung/Tenson is fulfilled?

8. What is expected from Samsung/Tenson out of your perspective in order to create value for your sponsorship relationship?

9. In what way do you make sure that what you expect from Samsung/Tenson is fulfilled?

10. What are your opinion concerning time span of your relationship with Samsung/Tenson?
    - What are your reasons behind the chosen time frame?
    - Which advantages/disadvantages do you see in a long-term/short-term relationship?

11. Could you elaborate how you communicate with Samsung/Tenson
    - What are important aspects in order to achieve a good communication?

12. Are there any areas in your relationship with Samsung/Tenson where you can see some room for improvements?
    - If yes, please exemplify
Appendix 2 Intervjuguide för Svenska Skicrosslandslaget

Generell Information:

- Namn på organisationen:
- Namn och position på de intervjuade:
- Ansvarsområden:
- Startår för företaget:
- Affärsidé:

1. Vilka är generellt sätt era huvudanledningar till varför ni ingår sponsringsavtal?
   - På vilket sätt är dessa de viktigaste faktorerna för er?

2. Vilka faktorer anser ni vara de viktigaste för att skapa värde i en sponsringsrelation?
   - På vilket sätt är dessa så viktiga?
   - Vad gör ni för att försäkra er om att dessa faktorer skapar det förväntade värdet i sponsringsrelationen?

3. Skulle ni kunna nämna vad det är som gör att Samsung/Tenson är intressanta för er att samarbeta med? (Vad är det för speciella egenskaper de besitter?)
   - På vilket sätt skapar dessa egenskaper värde för er sponsringsrelation?

4. Ser ni några likheter mellan ert företag och det svenska skicrosslandslaget?
   - Om ja, skulle ni kunna beskriva dessa likheter?

5. Vad har ni för mål med er sponsringsrelation med Samsung/Tenson?
   - Har ni några gemensamma mål tillsammans med Samsung/Tenson?

6. Vad tror ni att Samsung/Tenson har för förväntningar på er?
7. På vilket sätt arbetar ni för att leva upp till de förväntningar Samsung/Tenson har på er?

8. Om vi nu vänder på det, vad har ni för förväntningar på Samsung/Tenson? (Vad är det ni förväntar er ska skapa värde till relationen?)

9. På vilket sätt försäkrar ni er att Samsung/Tenson lever upp till dessa förväntningar?

10. Hur ser ert samarbete med Samsung/Tenson ut vad gäller tidsperiod?
    - Vad är anledningen till att ni bestämt er för att satsa på denna tidsperiod?
    - Vad anser ni vara fördelar/nackdelar med att satsa på en längre respektive kortare period?

11. Skulle ni kunna beskriva på vilket sätt ni kommunicerar med Samsung/Tenson?
    - Vilka faktorer är viktiga för er vad gäller att uppnå en god kommunikation?

12. I relationen mellan er och Samsung/Tenson, finns det något område där ni ser att det finns möjlighet till förbättringar?
    - Om ja, ge exempel
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